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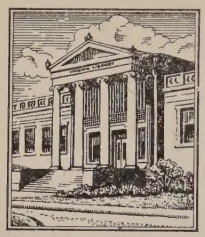
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THE LITERATURE

OF THE

FRENCH RENAISSANCE

BY

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CORRIGENDA

p. 68, l. 24. *For* 1549 *read* 1594.
p. 189, l. 5. *For* 1513 *read* 1583.
p. 217, l. 12. *For* 1738 *read* 1638.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LESSER STARS

1. *Tyard, Belleau, Baïf.*

Of the remaining members of the Pleiad, Jodelle is chiefly known by his dramatic work and must therefore be reserved for a later chapter, while Dorat wrote little French poetry and that of no importance. Pontus de Tyard was a poet only in his younger days[1]. He was a man of property and exercised much hospitality at his *château* of Bissy in the Mâconnais. In 1578 he was made bishop of Châlons-sur-Saône. He lived till the very end of our period, dying in 1605, the year in which Malherbe came to Paris. His first volume of poetry, composed chiefly of sonnets, entitled *Erreurs amoureuses*, appeared at the close of 1549[2]. Like Du Bellay's *Olive*, which had appeared, as we have seen, earlier in the year, it shews strong marks of the combined influence of Petrarchism and the doctrine of spiritual love, and thus furnishes additional evidence of how closely at first the Pleiad trod in the footsteps of the school of Lyons. As in the case of Scève, Tyard's favourite models were the Italians who flourished at the close of the fifteenth century, especially Cariteo[a] and Tebaldeo, whose sugared conceits he delights in reproducing. Two years later (1551) he shewed his interest in the subject of spiritual love by translating the *Dialoghi di amore* of Leo Hebraeus[3] and in the same year he published *Continuation*

[1] 1521–1605. See Pasquier, *Recherches*, VII. c. x.; Jeandet, *Pontus de Tyard*.

[2] The printing was finished November 5; the date of the privilege is September 13, 1549.

[3] It appeared without his name, but with his device; see *ante*, I. 137—8.

des Erreurs amoureuses. A third book of *Erreurs* and a volume entitled *Livre de vers lyriques*, both of which appeared in 1555, shew more traces of the influence of Ronsard, but throughout his short poetical career Tyard remained more or less independent of the chief of the Pleiad[1]. His work is unoriginal, correct and dull, but one sonnet, which first appeared in the collected edition of his poems published in 1573, is worth quoting:

Père du doux repos, Sommeil, père du Songe,
Maintenant que la nuict, d'une grande ombre obscure,
Faict à cest air serain humide couverture,
Viens, Sommeil désiré, et dans mes yeux te plonge.
Ton absence, Sommeil, languissamment allonge
Et me fait plus sentir la peine que j'endure.
Viens, Sommeil, l'assoupir et la rendre moins dure,
Viens abuser mon mal de quelque doux mensonge.
Jà le muet Silence un esquadron conduit
De fantosmes ballans dessous l'aveugle nuict;
Tu me dédaignes seul, qui te suis tant dévot!
Viens, Sommeil désiré, m'environner la teste,
Car, d'un vœu non menteur, un bouquet je t'appreste
De ta chère morelle et de ton cher pavot[2].

It may be added that Tyard, true to his strong Italian proclivities, not only used *terza rima* but was the first to introduce the *sestina* into France. There are two examples of it in his *Erreurs amoureuses*[3].

There remain Remy Belleau and Jean-Antoine de Baïf, of whom Belleau is decidedly the better poet. With little originality or vigour he reaches by dint of careful observation, patient workmanship, good taste, and sincerity a high level of execution. He had a genuine love of country life and simple country ways, and his eclogues shew more of the spirit of Virgil than those of any other writer of his school. Of all the members of the Pleiad he was Ronsard's closest friend and most constant companion. Born, according to

[1] See F. Flamini, in *Rev. de la Ren.* 1. 43 ff.

[2] *Œuvres*, ed. Marty-Laveaux, p. 166; Saintsbury, *Specimens of French Literature*, p. 68.

[3] L. E. Kastner, *History of French Versification*, p. 284, prints three strophes and the *envoi* of a *sestina*.

Colletet, in 1526 or 1527[1], he made his *début* in 1556 with the translation of "Anacreon" to which reference has already been made. His renderings are neat and graceful enough, but Ronsard hit the mark when, punning on his name, he said he was too sober to translate Anacreon[2]. In the same year he became attached to the household of René de Lorraine, Marquis d'Elbeuf, a younger brother of the Duc de Guise, and accompanied him on the ill-starred expedition to Naples in 1557. Some six years later he became tutor to his son and took up his residence at the *château* of Joinville. His principal works are a comedy, of which hereafter, a *Bergerie*, and *Amours et nouveaux échanges de pierres précieuses*. The *Bergerie* is divided into a *première* and *seconde journée*, the first 'day' being published separately in 1565 and the complete work in 1572. It consists of various poems, more or less relating to country life, strung together on a loose thread of prose after the fashion of Sannazaro's *Arcadia*. Among the more noteworthy are a *Chant pastoral* on the death of Joachim du Bellay[3], an *Epithalame* for Charles de Lorraine and Claude, daughter of Henry II[4], and a song beginning *Douce et belle bouchelette*[5]. But the best and the best known is *Avril*[6]:

Avril, l'honneur et des bois
Et des mois,
Avril, la douce esperance
Des fruits qui sous le coton
Du bouton
Nourrissent leur jeune enfance;
Avril, l'honneur des prez verds,
Jaunes, pers,
Qui d'une humeur bigarrée
Emaillent de mille fleurs
De couleurs
Leur parure diaprée.

[1] Colletet, whose Life is prefixed to Gouverneur's edition, says that he died March 7, 1577, aged fifty. The day of the month is wrongly given (see *post*).

[2] Tu es un trop sec biberon
Pour un tourneur d'Anacréon. *Odes*, II. xxii.

[3] *Œuvres*, ed. Marty-Laveaux, I. 293 (first published separately in 1560).

[4] *ib.* 238. [5] *ib.* 279.

[6] *ib.* 201; translated by A. Lang, *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France*, p. 19.

There is nothing highly original in this poem, written as it was after Ronsard's *Bel aubespin florissant*, but it is exceedingly graceful and throughout the whole thirteen stanzas there is not a flaw in the workmanship. For such originality as Belleau possessed we must look to his *Pierres précieuses* or metamorphoses[1]. Here his talent for portraying the physical aspect of things, which is comparable to that of Théophile Gautier, shews to advantage. The best of the purely narrative pieces is *L'Améthyste*, which contains the following elaborate and glowing description of the car of Dionysus:

D'un pied prompt et leger ces folles Bassarides
Environnent le char; l'une se pend aux brides
Des onces mouchetez d'estoiles sur le dos,
Onces à l'œil subtil, au pied souple et dispos,
Au mufle herissé de deux longues moustaches;
L'autre met dextrement les tigres aux attaches
Tisonnez sur la peau, les couple deux à deux:
Ils ronflent de colère et vont rouillant les yeux.
Un fin drap d'or frisé, semé de perles fines,
Les couvre jusqu'au flanc, les houpes à crespines
Flottent sur le genou: plus humbles devenus,
On agence leur queue en tortillons menus.
D'or fin est le branquar, d'or la jante et la roue
Et d'yvoire indien est la pouppe et la proue:
L'une soustient le char, l'autre dans le moyeu
Des rouleaux accouplez met les bouts de l'essieu,
Puis tirant la surpente allegrement habile,
Arreste les anneaux d'une longue cheville
Dans les trous du branquar: le dessus est couvert
De lierre menu et de ce pampre verd
Où pendent à l'envy les grappes empourprées
Sous les tapis rameux des fueillades pamprées[2].

La Perle[3] is a fairly good lyric, though more descriptive than lyrical, but the gem of the whole series is the lyrical romance entitled *La pierre aqueuse* or Aquamarine—which begins as follows:

C'estoit une belle brune
Filant au clair de la lune,

[1] *Les amours et nouveaux eschanges de pierres précieuses: vertus et proprietez d'icelles*, 1576.

[2] *Œuvres*, II. 171. [3] *ib.* 186.

Qui laissa choir son fuzeau
Sur le bord d'une fontaine :
Mais courant après sa laine
Plonge la teste dans l'eau,
Et se noya la pauvrette :
Car à sa voix trop foiblette
Nul son desastre sentit,
Puis assez loin ses compagnes
Parmi les verdes campagnes
Gardoyent leur troupeau petit.
Hà ! trop cruelle adventure !
Hà ! mort trop fière et trop dure !
Et trop cruel le flambeau,
Sacré pour son hymenée,
Qui l'attendant l'a menée,
Au lieu du lit, au tombeau[1].

The year after the publication of *Les pierres précieuses*, Belleau died, and Ronsard wrote for him the shortest and best of his epitaphs :

Ne taillez, mains industrieuses,
Des pierres pour couvrir Belleau :
Luy-mesme à basty son tombeau
Dedans ses pierres précieuses[2].

Jean-Antoine de Baïf was, as we have seen, the member of the Pleiad whose association with Ronsard was of longest date. The son of a man who was not only in high place but was of considerable distinction as a humanist, he had from his tenderest years the most distinguished scholars in France for his tutors, Charles Estienne, Jacques Toussain and Jean Dorat[3]. His father died in 1547 leaving him a house in Paris and a small property in Anjou. He was only twenty when he published a narrative poem, imitated from Moschus,

[1] *Œuvres*, II. 248.

[2] Ronsard, *Œuvres*, VII. 247. Belleau was buried on the 6th of March, 1577, so that Colletet is wrong in giving March 7 as the day of his death.

[3] He was born at Venice in February 1532 :

Oust (Août) *dans Paris vit le carnage* (the massacre of St Bartholomew) ;
Le fevrier davant, mon âge
L'an quarantième accomplissoit.

For an account of his early life see the poem *Au roy*, which was prefixed to the collected edition of his poems published in 1572–3. He died in 1589.

entitled *Le ravissement d'Europe* (1552)[1], and it is doubtful whether he ever wrote anything better. It has the merit of grace and elegance and a lively fancy, and to these qualities Baïf added little in later life. At the close of the same year he published another small volume entitled *Amours*, addressed to a fictitious lady under the name of Meline[2]. It is noteworthy that little more than half the pieces are sonnets—in the second part there are only two—and that these are much inferior to the other poems, which are chiefly odes of a light character.

The odes are at any rate natural, being alike in form and matter far better suited than the Petrarchian sonnet to Baïf's temperament. For he was neither a man of strong emotions nor a conscientious artist. Unfortunately in his next attempt, having meanwhile found a real mistress[3] who treated him with the orthodox Petrarchian cruelty, he reverted to the sonnet-form with increased energy, and the new volume, entitled *Amours de Francine*, and divided into four books, serves to shew that a real mistress can inspire just as cold and artificial poetry as a fictitious one. In the two latter books there are no sonnets, and one of the best pieces *Apres les vents* is written in *terza rima*, but it is characteristic of Baïf, who was nothing if not an *improvisatore*, that the execution falls off considerably towards the close of the poem[4]. In 1572–3 he published a collected edition of his works in four volumes. The fourth, entitled *Les passetemps*, contains his most celebrated poem *Du printemps*[5], which is often compared with Belleau's *Avril*. But the execution is more commonplace and by no means so uniformly careful. If we compare the poem with Meleager's original, we see how Baïf shirks the little details and delicate touches of the Greek artist. The best stanza is the last:

[1] *Œuvres*, ed. Marty-Laveaux, II. 421; *Poésies choisies*, ed. Becq de Fouquières, p. 78.

[2] *Les amours de Jan Antoine de Baif*, 1552: the printing was finished on December 10.

[3] She was sister to the lady whom Jacques Tahureau celebrated under the name of *l'Admirée*.

[4] *Œuvres*, II. 97; *Poésies choisies*, p. 152.

[5] *Œuvres*, IV. 210; *Poésies choisies*, p. 233.

Et si le chanter m'agrée,
N'est-ce pas avec raison,
Puisqu'ainsi tout se recrée
Avec la gaye saison.

But if Baïf was an indifferent poet, he was a man of an active and enterprising mind who delighted to experiment in various directions. He translated the *Antigone* of Sophocles and the *Eunuchus* of Terence and adapted the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus to French readers. But his most popular and at the same time his most original work is *Mimes, enseignements et proverbes,* of which two books were published in his lifetime and two after his death[1]. The term *mimes* was due to the fact that the chief source of the work was the *Sententiae* of Publilius Syrus, a mime-writer of the first century B.C., whose mimes or farces contained numerous wise and moral sayings, which were collected in the first century of our era and largely added to during the middle ages. They were edited by Henri Estienne, and were frequently translated into French in the course of the sixteenth century[2]. Besides this source Baïf drew from Theognis and Phocylides, and from two modern collections of sayings, the *Adages* of Jean le Bon and a collection of Italian proverbs with French equivalents which was published in 1548. Thus his *Mimes* consist of a variety of satirical and moral reflexions, with the occasional introduction of a short fable, strung together with little or no attempt at unity and written in a jerky octosyllabic metre. The one addressed to Villeroy may serve as a specimen. The opening lines give an account of the writer's various literary performances:

Quand je pense au divers ouvrage
Où j'ai badiné tout mon âge,
Tantost epigrammatisant,
Tantost sonnant la tragedie,
Puis me gossant en comedie,
Puis des amours petrarquisant[3].

[1] Book I was published in 1576, I and II together in 1581 and the whole four books in 1597.

[2] P. Syrus is often quoted by Montaigne, once by name.

[3] *Œuvres*, v. 41; *Poésies choisies*, p. 287.

There is more unity about the last *mime* of the fourth book, in which Baïf, writing as a catholic and a loyalist, advocates as Ronsard had done in his earliest *discours* a reform of the church from within. As poetry the *mimes* are hardly superior to Marot's *coq à l'ânes*, on which Du Bellay poured such contempt, but the style is well-suited to Baïf's facile and slipshod method of production. Another novelty was a didactic poem on Meteorology, imitated from Aratus, Virgil and Manilius, but only one book appeared[1].

Baïf's other experiments were in the direction of language and metre. In 1574 he published a volume entitled *Etrenes de poézie fransoèze en vers mezurés*[2], in which he not only adhered with a few modifications to the system of spelling advocated by Ramus, but gave specimens of poems written in classical metres. It is obvious that such an attempt is far more difficult in French than in English, and that at any rate Baïf was not the man to accomplish so great a revolution. Although some other poets, Marc-Claude de Buttet, D'Aubigné, Passerat, and especially Rapin, made similar experiments, the attempt to introduce 'measured' verse met with little favour[3]. Baïf however persevered for a time in his task, and among the poems unpublished at his death were a translation of the Psalms (completed in 1573) and three books of *Chansonnettes* in *vers mesurés*[4]. In spite of his failure it is possible that if a stronger poet, Ronsard for instance, had gone to work on somewhat different lines there might have been introduced into French poetry at this critical stage of its developement a

[1] *Le premier des météores*, 1567; *Œuvres*, II. 1; *Poésies choisies*, pp. 7 ff.

[2] *i.e.* verse scanned according to quantity.

[3] See for these attempts Pasquier, *Recherches*, VII. c. xi; D'Aubigné, *Œuvres*, I. 453; Darmesteter and Hatzfeld, pp. 113 ff.; Kastner, *op. cit.* 295 ff. (an excellent account). About the year 1562 Jacques de la Taille wrote a treatise entitled *La manière de faire des vers en françois comme en grec et en latin*, but it was not published till after his death in 1573.

[4] He also introduced a line of fifteen syllables, scanned in the ordinary way, which he called *vers baïfin*:

Je veux donner aux François un vers de plus libre accordance
Pour le joindre au luth sonné d'une moins contraincte cadance.

He also invented other rhythms, which shew however more ingenuity than taste.

certain amount of quantitative measurement, and as a consequence a larger musical element.

For at the bottom of Baïf's attempted reforms both in spelling and in versification was the belief which he shared with Ronsard[1] in the close connexion between poetry and music. It was this belief which led him to found under the patronage of Charles IX the *Académie de poésie et de musique*[2]. Established at the close of 1570[3] it consisted of two classes of members, Musicians or poets and Listeners (*Auditeurs*), the former class being paid stipends provided by the subscriptions of the latter. At the weekly meetings which were held on Sundays, as a rule in Baïf's house, the Musicians recited their poems, apparently to the accompaniment of music[4]. During the lifetime of Charles IX, who accepted the title of Protector and First Listener of the society, the Academy flourished greatly, and numbered the chief poets of the day among its members. Its chief business was, as Sainte-Beuve says, the determination of the quantity of sounds[5], a work with which, as we have seen, the phonetic reforms, proposed by Baïf and others, were closely connected. And not only in the matter of quantity, but in everything connected with poetry, Baïf endeavoured to revive classical practices. It was before the Academy that he recited his versions of

[1] *La musique, disoit-il, est la sœur puisnée de la poësie...sans la musique la poësie est presque sans grace.* Binet, *Vie de Ronsard.*

[2] See É. Fremy, *L'académie des derniers Valois*, 1887.

[3] Date of letters-patent, November, 1570.

[4] *Les musiciens seront tenus tous les jours de dimanche chanter et reciter leurs lettres et musique mesurées, selon l'ordre convenu par entr'eux, deux heures d'horloge durant en faveur des auditeurs escrits au livre de l'academie où enrigistreront les noms, surnoms et qualitez de ceux qui se cottisent pour l'entretien de l'academie, ensemble la somme en laquelle se seront de leur gré cottisez ; et pareillement les noms et surnoms des musiciens d'icelle et les convenances sous lesquelles ils seront entrez, receus et appointez.* (Statute 2.)

The twelfth statute is so admirable that I cannot forbear quoting it also:

Les auditeurs, durant que l'on chantera, ne parleront ny ne s'acousteront ny feront bruit, mais se tiendront le plus coy qu'il leur sera possible, jusques à ce que la chanson qui se prononcera soit finie ; et durant que se dira une chanson, ne fraperont à l'huis de la sale qu'on ouvrira à la fin de chaque chanson pour admettre les auditeurs attendans.

[5] *Mesurer les sons élémentaires de la langue* (*Tableau*, p. 81).

Sophocles and Terence, and made suggestions for the introduction on the French stage of the rhythmical movements of the classical chorus[1]. After the death of Charles IX the Academy languished for a time till in the year 1576 it was reconstituted. Baïf himself soon after the realisation of his project began to suffer from the complaint of which he eventually died, and the remainder of his life was clouded not only by the straitened circumstances in which the religious wars involved so many men of letters, but by ill-health. He survived however all the members of the Pleiad except Pontus de Tyard, and died on September 19, 1589, while the new king, Henry IV, was fighting against the League at Arques. Nature had not endowed Baïf with more than a slender portion of poetic genius, and he did not sufficiently cultivate that portion. The faults more or less common to the whole school, the dependence on models, the pedantry, the artificiality, are more conspicuous in him than in any other member of it. But the classical Renaissance had no more enthusiastic or enterprising champion, not even in Ronsard himself.

2. *Magny, Tahureau, Louise Labé, Jamyn.*

Outside the actual Pleiad, the most productive and, with the exception of Louise Labé, the most interesting poet, at any rate of those who confined themselves to non-dramatic poetry, is Olivier de Magny. He has been compared to Alfred de Musset, and certainly he reminds us of Sainte-Beuve's remarks on that poet: "*il entra dans le sanctuaire lyrique tout éperonné, et par la fenêtre, je le crois bien*," and again, "*il osa avoir de l'esprit, même avec un brin de scandale.*" And Magny might have said of himself, as Musset did:

Il était gai, jeune et hardi,
Et se jetait en étourdi
A l'aventure;
Librement il respirait l'air,
Et parfois il se montrait fier
D'une blessure.

[1] See Baïf's *Au roy* (*Poésies choisies*, p. 52).

For Magny, like Musset, drank freely of the cup of pleasure, and he gives us his 'confessions' with the same *naïve* frankness. But his love-affairs, unlike Musset's, never passed from the domain of gallantry to that of passion, so that though he outlived the age at which Musset had written practically all his best things, he resembles rather the poet of the *Andalouse* and the *Ballade à la lune* than the poet of the *Nuits* and the *Stances à la Malibran*. The date of his birth is uncertain, but it must have been about 1530[1]. He was quite a young man when he came from Cahors, of which like Marot he was a native, to Paris, where he became secretary to his fellow-provincial Hugues Salel, abbot of Saint-Chéron[2]. His patron dying in 1553 he was left for a time without any regular employment. It was doubtless with a view to obtaining it that he published in that year a volume of poems entitled *Amours*. It consisted of 102 sonnets addressed to an ideal mistress, probably Marguerite de Gordon, a noble lady of the neighbourhood of Cahors, and of fifteen odes, of which some are addressed to various friends and others to a real mistress, whom he calls Castianire[3]. In the ease and fluency of its verse this volume is very similar to Baïf's *Amours* and as in the case of Baïf the odes of the real lover are superior to the sonnets of the ideal one. They have the grace and liveliness which come naturally to Magny when he is himself and not an imitator of others. The succeeding volume, *Gayetés*, published in 1554, shews the same qualities and deals with the same subjects, love and friendship. The longest piece, *Les Matinales*, is a clever imitation of Ronsard's *Les Bacchanales*[4].

Early in 1555 he went to Rome as secretary to Jean d'Avanson, who was charged with a special mission to the Pope[5]. He returned in 1556 and in the following year

[1] For Magny see J. Favre, *Olivier de Magny*, 1885.

[2] See *ante*, I. p. 93.

[3] He also published in 1553 *Hymne sur la naissance de Madame Marguerite de France...avec quelques autres vers liriques* (*Dernières poésies*).

[4] Ed. E. Courbet, p. 62.

[5] M. Favre, p. 53, assigns this mission to 1553; the correct date is given by

published a new volume under the title of *Souspirs*. It was written at Rome at the same time as Du Bellay's *Regrets*, which it closely resembles in title, form and substance:

> Selon les passions où j'ai esté submis,
> Ou bien, ou mal, d'amour, ou de mes ennemys,
> J'ay descrit chacun jour la cause toute telle.
> Et c'est pourquoy, Duthier, on void dedans ces vers
> Par cy, par là meslez tant d'arguments divers
> Et que plains de soupirs, Soupirs je les appelle[1].

It is impossible to say which of the two men was the originator of the idea, but doubtless the execution was carried out in friendly rivalry[2]. Magny's *journal intime* is kept with far less discretion, so far as his own affairs are concerned, than Du Bellay's. In execution it shews a marked improvement on his preceding work; the style is not merely fluent, but it is often distinguished. The variety of the themes, *tant d'arguments divers*, and the poet's light touch make this volume more agreeable reading than any of the sonnet-sequences of the period, except Du Bellay's *Regrets*. As is usual with Magny there is a good deal of imitation, not to say literal translation, from the Latins and Italians, especially from Petrarch. The sonnet which most excited the admiration of Magny's contemporaries, and which was set to music by the celebrated composer Orlando di Lassus, is one made on the pattern of a *strambotto* by Serafino:

> M. Hola, Charon, Charon Nautonnier infernal.
> C. Qui est cest importun qui si pressé m'appelle?
> M. C'est l'esprit éploré d'un amoureux fidelle,
> Lequel pour bien aimer n'eust jamais que du mal.
> C. Que cherches tu de moy? M. Le passaige fatal.
> C. Qui est ton homicide? M. Ô demande cruelle!
> Amour m'a fait mourir. C. Jamais dans ma nasselle
> Nul subget à l'amour je ne conduis à val.
> M. Et de grace, Charon, reçois-moy dans ta barque.
> C. Cherche un autre nocher, car ny moy ny la Parque

M. Chamard, *J. du Bellay*, p. 315 n. 1. Magny clearly did not leave France till after the publication of the 1554 volume.

[1] Concluding sonnet (ed. Courbet, p. 123).

[2] Magny arrived in Rome at the end of March 1555, and Du Bellay did not begin the *Regrets* before the summer of that year.

N'entreprenons jamais sur ce maistre des dieux.
M. J'iray donc maugré toy, car j'ay dedans mon ame
Tant de traicts amoureux et de larmes aux yeux,
Que je feray le fleuve, et la barque, et la rame[1].

But the gem of the series is the following, which in its simplicity and in its distinction, in its imaginative language and rich harmony, is worthy to stand beside the best sonnets of Ronsard and Du Bellay:

Puisque le cler Soleil veult apparoistre aux cieux,
Et que je voy desja la rougissante Aurore
Qui de ses raiz vermeils le ciel d'Inde colore,
Sus-sus chassons, Bellay, ce somme de noz yeux.
Allons passer aux champs ce loisir ocieux,
Pangeas avecques nous y viendra bien encore,
Et qu'un chascun de nous à son reng rememore
Ses antiques amours d'un chant soulacieux.
Imitons les oiseaux qui par ces verds boucaiges
Au gazouil des ruysseaux degoizent leurs ramaiges,
Bienveignant de leurs voix l'Aurore à son retour.
Voyla ja Gohory, qui de sa main apreste
Un chapeau verdissant qui ne craint la tempeste,
Pour cil qui ce jourd'huy chantera mieux l'amour[2].

The *Odes* published in 1559[3] were Magny's most ambitious work, the first two books consisting chiefly of long, too long, odes addressed to various friends and patrons. But it is in the shorter and lighter poems of the three latter books that he is at his best. In the third book are the *Polypheme*[4], a fairly close imitation of the *Cyclops* of Theocritus, five *Vœux*[5] which should be compared with Du Bellay's, an Horatian ode entitled *De la condition de la vie des hommes*[6], and a charming ode of great vivacity on a dog named Peloton or Ploton, whom Du Bellay had already celebrated[7]. But I will quote in preference to these two from the fourth book. The first shews how gracefully and even originally Magny could treat the well-worn subject of the gold and ivory, the coral and pearls of a mistress's face:

[1] No. lxiv. *ib.* p. 47.
[2] No. cxxxiii. *ib.* p. 94.
[3] Ed. Courbet, 2 vols. 1876.
[4] II. 14.
[5] *ib.* 59—64.
[6] *ib.* 74; Saintsbury, *Specimens of French Literature*, p. 68.
[7] Ed. Courbet, II. 79.

Elle est à vous, douce maistresse,
Ceste belle et dorée tresse,
Qui feroit honte au mesmes or,
Et ce front qui d'ivoire semble,
Et ces yeux deux astres ensemble,
Maistresse, sont à vous encor.
A vous est ce beau teinct de rozes,
Et ces deux belles levres closes,
Qui semblent deux brins de coral :
Et ces dentz par où se repousse
Le musc de vostre aleine douce,
Qui semblent perles ou cristal.
Bref à vous est la belle face,
Le bon esprit, la bonne grace,
Qu'on veoid en vous et l'entretien :
Seulle est à moy la peine dure,
Et tous les travaulx que j'endure
Pour vous aymer et vouloir bien[1].

The other is a concise and beautiful expression of that Renaissance spirit of which Magny was so representative a type :

Pour garder que le plaisir
Qui nous vient ore saysir,
De long temps ne nous eschappe,
Du Buys, fais porter la nappe,
Et dresser viste à manger.
Tandis je vaiz arranger
Deça et de la Catulle,
Properce, Ovide, et Tibulle,
Dessus la table espendus,
Entre les lucz bien tendus,
Et les lucz entre les rozes,
Et les rozes my decloses
Entre les œilletz fleuriz,
Les œilletz entre les liz,
Et les liz entre les tasses,
Parmy les vaisselles grasses.
La mort, peult estre, demain
Viendra prendre par la main
Le plus gay de ceste trouppe,
Pour l'enlever sur sa croupe

[1] Ed. Courbet, II. 156.

Luy disant à l'impourveu,
'Sus gallant, c'est assez beu,
Il est temps de venir boire
Aux enfers de l'onde noire[1].'

It will be noticed that Magny here makes use of a metrical resource which one rarely meets with in the poetry of the Pleiad school, but which, when used in moderation, often adds to the music of poetry—I mean repetition, or the principle of the refrain. It will be found in other poems of the *Odes*; indeed in some it degenerates into a mechanical jingle[2].

On May 31, 1559, probably after the publication of the Odes, Magny was appointed one of the King's secretaries. Two years later 'death took by the hand the gayest of the troop[3].' Magny has many of the defects of his school. He is too much given to imitation; he is often artificial and pedantic; he has even greater facility than Baïf, and he has the same disinclination to blot. But he has more originality, and more real poetic feeling. His short pieces, in which he excels, have not only grace and delicacy, but precision. Of all the poets of the Pleiad he comes nearest to his friend Du Bellay. His poetry has an atmosphere of its own, and it is an atmosphere of life.

Another poet who, like Magny, died young was Jacques Tahureau, of an Angevin family which had settled at Le Mans where he was born in 1527. He died towards the close of 1555, having published in the previous year two volumes of poetry entitled respectively *Premières Poésies*, and *Sonnets, odes, et mignardises amoureuses de l'Admirée*[4]. His friend Vauquelin de la Fresnaye has spoken of his 'sugared' art[5], but this expression only applies to the *mignardises amoureuses*

[1] *ib.* 88.

[2] For instance in the last stanza of the Ode, *A s'amye en lui disant adieu* (*ib.* 143), and in the *chanson* on p. 173.

[3] His place was filled up on July 31, 1561 (*Dernières poésies*, ed. Courbet, p. xxx).

[4] The privilege for both volumes is dated March 7, 154$\frac{7}{8}$. The *premières poésies*, which are of little merit, were therefore probably written before this date. The sonnets were not written before 1553.

[5] Lors Angers nous fit voir Tahureau, qui mignart
Nous affrianda tous au sucre de cet art.
A son livre.

and the *baisers*, which form but a small proportion of his second volume. The sonnets and a few other grave poems, which belong to the last two or three years of his life, are more characteristic of the man. The sonnets are distinguished from the great majority of the sonnet-sequences of the period, first by a note of real passion, and secondly by the absence of the usual Petrarchian commonplaces. They have flashes of real imagination, and considerable originality of thought, together with a love of argument and antithesis which reminds one of Shakespeare's sonnets. But they are careless, rough and inharmonious, and though they contain some lines of first-rate quality[1], they are seldom good throughout. It is doubtful whether so poor a workman would ever have developed into a great poet. The following is a favourable specimen of his work:

Dames de Tours, si onq en vostre cueur
Entra d'Amour la poignante estincelle,
Voyez, helas! la cruaute de celle
Qui se repaist et baigne en ma langueur.
Je suys certain que, voyant la rigueur
Dont elle tant à sa moytié rebelle,
La bannirez au nom de Tourangelle,
Nom qui ne sent rien moins qu'une ranqueur.
Mais, mais voyez, que dis-je! ô grand blaspheme!
Voudriez vous bien cette beauté extresme
Desestimer digne de vostre nom,
Celle sans qui l'honneur de vostre ville,
Veuf de son loz, languiroit inutile
Et orphelin de son plus haut renom[2]?

[1] Such as:

Tu pourras bien choisir un serviteur
Ayant en main de plus grandes richesses,
Tout semé d'or, de gemmeuses largesses,
Superbe et fier d'un hazardeux bonheur.
lxxxv. (ed. Blanchemain, II. 131).

Traisnant ma vie amerement austere.
xlvii. (*ib.* 58).

Soit qu'au milieu de la plaine muette,
Compagne à tous mes plus segrez ennuiz.
lviii. (*ib.* 66).

[2] There is a breath of rich imagination in one of the two sonnets (lxxx. *ib.* 93) translated by A. Lang, *op. cit.* p. 36.

Tahureau had a sceptical and pessimistic vein in his nature, which going deeper than it did in some of his fellow-poets gives a sombre tone to several of his poems, such as the elegy to Charles Belot on the death of his sister and the two poems entitled *De la vanité des hommes* and *De l'inconstance des choses*[1]. The following stanzas are from *De la vanité des hommes*:

L'homme ne scaurait prendre en un jour tant d'ébas,
Que, devant la soirée,
Il ne die en son cœur, plus de cent fois : Helas !
Maugréant la journée ;

Et le fol au rebours, qui tousjours se tourmente
Pour peu d'occasion,
De lui-mesme bourreau vainement se lamente
Comblé d'affliction.

Maint piqué vainement d'un désir trop extréme
Veut tout voir icy bas :
Il veut connoistre tout ; mais le grand sot, lui-mesme
Il ne se connoist pas.

. . . . . .

Tout ce que l'homme fait, tout ce que l'homme pense
En ce bas monde icy,
N'est rien qu'un vent legier, qu'une vaine esperance
Pleine d'un vain souci.

Fuions doncques, fuions ces trop vaines erreurs,
Dressons notre courage
Vers ce grand Dieu qui seul nous peut rendre vainqueurs
De ce mondain orage ;

Recherchons saintement sa parole fidelle,
Invoquons sa bonté,
Car, certes, sans cela notre race mortelle
N'est rien que vanité.

This 'conclusion of the whole matter' is noteworthy as being identical not only with that of *Ecclesiastes*, of which Tahureau left an unpublished translation in verse, but with his own conclusion in his prose dialogues[2]. These dialogues, which became exceedingly popular[3], were published, ten years

[1] *ib.* 170, 203, 221.

[2] *Heureux celui duquel l'esperance est au nom du Seigneur Dieu et qui ne s'est point arresté aux vanités et fausses reveries du monde.*

[3] There were fifteen editions from 1565 to 1602.

after his death, in 1565 under the title of *Les dialogues de feu Jaques Tahureau non moins profitables que facetieuses ou les vices d'un chacun sont repris fort âprement, pour nous animer davantage à les fuir et suivre la vertu*[1]. They have been generally classified among the *Contes* of the sixteenth century, but they contain few anecdotes, and, as Marty-Laveaux has pointed out (though he adopts the usual classification), they are, as the title shews, moral studies, almost sermons[2]. They are written in the dialogue form which Pierre Viret had made popular among Protestant writers, and are of little interest except as throwing some light on sixteenth century manners and customs. The speakers are *Democritic*, the censor of the world—his name also denotes that he is a follower of the philosopher Democritus,—and *Cosmophile* its apologist. But, as in most of these satirical dialogues, there is no attempt at fair play, and *Cosmophile* merely serves to feed *Democritic* with fresh fuel for his satire[3].

Tahureau, when he published his two volumes of poetry at Poitiers in 1554, was the recognised chief of a small band of young men of literary aspirations who for one reason or another were living in that city, which at this time seems to have been regarded as the literary capital not only of Poitou but of the neighbouring provinces. Guillaume Bouchet, the author of the *Serées*, was a bookseller of the town and of about the same age as Tahureau; Scévole de Sainte-Marthe, Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, Charles Toutain and André de Rivaudeau were students of the University and some ten

[1] Ed. F. Conscience, 1870.

[2] Petit de Julleville, III. 78.

[3] For a full discussion of the identity of *L'Admirée*, the lady of Tahureau's verse, see H. Chardon, *La vie de Tahureau*, 48 ff. and the references given in his pages. All that is certain is (1) that her real name was Marie, and that *L'Admirée* is an incomplete anagram of her name, (2) that she was the sister of Baïf's Francine, and a native of Tours, (3) that on September 28, 1555, Tahureau married Marie Grené who was living at La Charité, a town of the Nivernais on the right bank of the Loire. Blanchemain conjectured with a fair show of probability that the family name of the two sisters was De Gennes. It seems clear from Tahureau's poetry that some crisis took place in his life about 1553 which inspired him with a pessimistic view of life. My own belief is that Marie Grené consoled him for his long ill-treatment at the hands of *L'Admirée*.

years younger. Here too Jean-Antoine de Baïf, the close friend of Tahureau, resided for nine months and lost his heart to Francine. Here too Jean Bastier de la Peruse, a native of Angoulême, wrote his tragedy of *Médée*, and died like Tahureau in 1555.

In the same year 1555 there appeared in another quarter of France a volume of poetry which resembled Tahureau's in being rough and unequal in execution and in being the sincere record of a true passion. Louise Labé[1], *la belle Cordière*, the only distinguished French poetess of the Renaissance, is usually classed by historians of literature under the school of Lyons. It is sometimes added that she was a pupil of Maurice Scève, but there is no evidence of this, and her poetry is certainly very far removed from the cold metaphysical subtleties of Scève and Héroet. Moreover her poems did not appear till the year 1555, and her use of the sonnet-form shews that they must almost certainly have been written after 1549. Thus though her work both in its merits and in its defects is very different from that of the ordinary followers of Ronsard, it is to the period of the Pleiad that she properly belongs. She has occupied the attention of many biographers[2], but after all little is known of her life. According to her own account, which there does not seem

[1] b. 1525 or 26—d. 1566.

[2] The best and most sober account of her life is that by C. Boy in vol. II. of his edition. He thinks that she was born before 1524 on the ground that she must have been the daughter of her father's second wife, who is said to have died not later than that year. But the evidence for this is not very clear, and I see no reason to doubt her own statement that she was twenty-nine at the time of writing her third Elegy, which is evidently intended as an *envoi* to her volume. This was published in 1555 by Jean de Tournes under the title of *Euures de Louïze Labé Lionnoize*; it contained besides her own productions twenty-four poems written by various poets, including Scève, Baïf, Tyard and Magny. In the following year it was republished twice by Tournes and once at Rouen. There was no further edition till 1762, in which an ode by Peletier was added to the *Escriz de divers poëtes*. In the last century there were several editions, but only two of any merit, that of P. Blanchemain and that of Charles Boy. M. Boy has disposed of much of the romance which Turquety and Blanchemain had woven round Louise, especially of the story that she fought in the siege of Perpignan. M. Favre in his *Olivier de Magny* takes the same view as M. Boy of her character.

sufficient reason to doubt, she was born in 1525 or 1526. The daughter of a well-to-do ropemaker, she married a husband of the same trade, named Ennemond Perrin; and being clever, beautiful and attractive, received men of letters at her house. Scandal naturally busied itself with her name, but there is nothing to shew that she was other than a virtuous woman[1]. Magny on his way to Rome in 1555 paid court to her and hoped he had made an impression. But on his return a year later he was undeceived, and his injured vanity led him to write a poem for which, according to modern notions, he should have been horsewhipped[2]. There had been one great passion in the life of Louise and this had left room for no other. It had been many years ago, before she was sixteen, but it had burnt itself into her imagination, and it still burns in her verse:

Tout aussi tot que ie commence à prendre
Dens le mol lit le repos desiré,
Mon triste esprit hors de moy retiré
S'en va vers toy incontinent se rendre.
Lors m'est avis que dedens mon sein tendre
Ie tiens le bien, ou i'ay tant aspiré,
Et pour lequel i'ay si haut souspiré,
Que de sanglots ay souvent cuidé fendre.
O dous sommeil, ô nuit à moy heureuse!
Plaisant repos, plein de tranquilité,
Continuez toutes les nuiz mon songe:
Et si iamais ma povre ame amoureuse
Ne doit avoir de bien en verité,
Faites au moins qu'elle en ait en mensonge.

Baise m'encor, rebaise moy et baïse:
Donne m'en un de tes plus savoureus,
Donne m'en un de tes plus amoureus:
Ie t'en rendray quatre plus chaus que braise.
Las, te pleins tu? ça que ce mal i'apaise,
En t'en donnant dix autres doucereus.
Ainsi meslans nos baisers tant heureus
Iouissons nous l'un de l'autre à notre aise.

[1] *Ceste avoit la face plus angelique, qu'humaine: mais ce n'estoit rien à la comparaison de son esprit tant chaste, tant vertueux, tant poëtique, tant rare en scavoir.* (Paradin, *Mémoires de l'hist. de Lyon*, 1573, cited by Boy.)

[2] *A sire Aymon, Odes*, II. 222 ff.

Lors double vie à chacun en suivra.
Chacun en soy et son ami vivra.
Permets m'Amour penser quelque folie :
Tousiours suis mal, vivant discrettement,
Et ne me puis donner contentement,
Si hors de moy ne fay quelque faillie.

Ne reprenez, Dames, si i'ay aymé :
Si i'ay senti mile torches ardantes,
Mile travaus, mile douleurs mordantes :
Si en pleurant, i'ay mon tems consumé,
Las que mon nom n'en soit par vous blamé.
Si i'ay failli, les peines sont presentes,
N'aigrissez point leurs pointes violentes :
Mais estimez qu'Amour, à point nommé,
Sans votre ardeur d'un Vulcan excuser,
Sans la beauté d'Adonis acuser,
Pourra, s'il veut, plus vous rendre amoureuses :
En ayant moins que moy d'ocasion,
Et plus d'estrange & forte passion.
Et gardez vous d'estre plus malheureuses[1].

The language is archaic and somewhat awkward, and there is little music in the verse, but these defects are redeemed by the sincerity of the passion and by the instinctive feeling for the true sonnet-cadence.

The three elegies which accompany the twenty-four sonnets are in no way remarkable, but the volume also contains a little prose-fable, *Debat de folie et d'amour*, which is full of charm and delicate observation. To write a mythological tale without pedantry in the days of the Pleiad was in itself a noteworthy achievement, and it is superior to the sonnets in execution. But it is to her sonnets that Louise owes her coronet of gold.

These are the chief poets who, born between 1520 and 1530, made their first appearance in the fifties. A few others of lesser merit have obtained the honour of a reprint in modern times. Such are Marc-Claude de Buttet, a native of Savoy, who had a fresh vein of fancy, which he expressed in somewhat provincial language[2]; Jean Doublet, a Norman,

[1] Sonnets ix, xviii, xxiv (printed from Boy's edition).

[2] *Epithalame*, 1559; *Amalthée*, 1560. He adopted phonetic spelling and wrote *vers mesurés* (Pasquier, *Recherches*, VII. xi); his rhymed Sapphics are not bad.

author of an indifferent volume of elegies; and Nicolas Ellain, a Paris physician whom I have already mentioned as the author of sonnets after the pattern of Du Bellay's *Regrets*. They have no merit but that of simple and correct language[1].

To these may be added Jacques de Fouilloux, a native of Poitou, who published in 1562 a treatise on hunting in prose interspersed with verse, which is often cited by Buffon, and which contained a poem in octosyllabic metre of considerable charm and shewing a genuine love of country life, entitled *L'adolescence de Jacques de Fouilloux*[2].

But these, as well as others who had a larger measure of contemporary fame, such as Guillaume des Autels, and Louis le Caron, who was a Platonist and a jurist of considerable distinction[3], may be dismissed in the words of Estienne Pasquier, *Chacun d'eux avoit sa maistresse qu'il magnifioit, et chacun se promettoit une immortalité de nom par ses vers; toutefois quelques-uns se trouvent avoir survécu leurs livres*[4].

Nor can Pasquier himself, so far as his poetry is concerned, be said to have escaped this fate. There is more merit in the verse of two other men who like himself obtained distinction in other forms of literature as well as in public life. Estienne de la Boétie, who was born at Bordeaux in 1530, and was thus a year younger than Pasquier, is best known first as the friend of Montaigne and secondly as the author of the *Contr'un*, but his few sonnets are not without interest. Those which Montaigne gave to the world in 1572 were addressed to his future wife, Marguerite, the daughter of Lancelot de Carle. Montaigne speaks of them as *sentant desja je ne scay quelle froideur maritale*, and preferred to them those which La Boétie wrote in more ardent youth to a lady

[1] If we may judge by the *Élégies à la belle fille* by Ferry Juliet of Besançon, published in 1557 and reprinted in 1883, the influence of the new school had not reached the birthplace of Victor Hugo.

[2] Printed in *Les poètes franç.* IV. 326. Fouilloux died during the reign of Charles IX: his volume is entitled *Venerie ou Traité de la Chasse*.

[3] b. 1536—d. 1616. See L. Pinvert in *Rev. de la Ren.* II. (1902).

[4] *Recherches*, VII. v. Pasquier gives a list of poets which is far more trustworthy than that of D'Aubigné, who includes several very unimportant names and omits such poets as Magny and Tahureau (*Œuvres*, I. 458).

who did not become his wife[1]. Rough and inharmonious as these are, they have the merit of sincerity, and we can readily believe the writer when he says,

Je dis ce que mon cœur, ce que mon mal me dit[2].

Moreover, he shews more originality of thought than the professional sonneteer of the period, and his conception of love is less material. In spite however of Montaigne's judgment the one sonnet of La Boétie's that seems worth quoting is from the later series:

Ce iourd'huy, du Soleil la chaleur alterée
A iauny le long poil de la belle Ceres:
Ores il se retire; et nous gaignons le frais,
Ma Marguerite et moy, de la douce seree;
Nous traçons dans les bois quelque voye esgaree:
Amour marche deuant, et nous marchons apres.
Si le vert ne nous plaist des espesses forests,
Nous descendons pour voir la couleur de la pree;
Nous viuons francs d'esmoy, et n'auons point soucy
Des Roys, ny de la cour, ny des villes aussi.
O Medoc, mon païs solitaire et sauvage,
Il n'est point de païs plus plaisant à mes yeux:
Tu es au bout du monde, et ie t'en ayme mieux,
Nous sçauons apres tous les malheurs de nostre aage[3].

I have already mentioned another distinguished public character, Scévole de Sainte-Marthe, as forming one of the Poitiers circle[4]. In 1569 he published a collected edition of his French poetry, and ten years later a new and augmented edition, the number of alterations in which shews that at any rate he took his art seriously[5]. One of the best of his sonnets is on the sonnet:

[1] The twenty-five later sonnets will be found in the *Œuvres Complètes* of La Boétie, ed. P. Bonnefons 1892. Six of them were printed by J.-A. de Baïf among his own *Amours* with very considerable differences, due no doubt to the desire of Baïf to give him a coat of Petrarchian varnish. See Bonnefons, pp. lxiii—lxx; he thinks that Montaigne also touched up his friend's work before publishing it. The earlier sonnets, twenty-nine in number, are those printed by Montaigne in his *Essais*, I. xxviii. They must have been written after 1550, for they refer to Ronsard's *Amours de Cassandre*.

[2] No. xi.

[3] *Œuvres*, p. 283.

[4] B. at Loudun 1536,—d. 1623.

[5] See Picot, I. nos. 715, 716.

Graves sonnets, que la docte Italie
A pour les siens la première enfantés,
Et que la France a depuis adoptés,
Vous apprenant une grace accomplie ;
Assez des-jà vostre gloire annoblie
Par tant d'esprits, qui vous ont rechantez,
Fait que de vous les haults cieux sont hantez,
Fait que de vous ceste terre est remplie.
Venez en rang aussi petits huitains,
Venez dizains, vrais enfans de la France :
Si au marcher vous n'estes si hautains,
Vous avez bien dessous moindre apparence
Autant de grace, et ne meritez pas
Qu'un estranger vous face mettre en bas[1].

There is merit too in a sonnet in which he looks back with regret on the days spent with Vauquelin at Poitiers :

La douce liberté nous servoit de nourrice,
Nous ignorions les maux qu'enfante l'avarice,
Aussi francs de soucy que purs de mauvaistié ;
Et l'orage cruel des querelles civiles,
Qui sur nous depuis lors s'est rué sans pitié,
N'avoit gasté nos champs et saccagé nos villes[2].

But he gave more time and attention to Latin verse than to French, and his didactic poem on the education of children, *Paedotrophia*, published in 1584, had from the moment of its first appearance an enormous success which can only be compared to that of Rousseau's *Émile*. There is only one work however of *le grand Scévole* which is consulted at the present day, and that is his *Elogia*, a collection of panegyrics on the illustrious Frenchmen who had died during his lifetime. The first edition, published in 1598, begins with Lefevre d'Étaples who died in 1536, the year of Sainte-Marthe's birth, and ends with Florent Chrestien who died in 1596. Fresh names were added in subsequent editions, the last being that of Estienne Pasquier who died in 1615[3]. Yet Sainte-Marthe survived him by eight years, dying in 1623, in his eighty-eighth year.

[1] *Œuvres choisies des poètes français du xvi^e siècle*, ed. L. Becq de Fouquières, p. 245.

[2] *ib.* p. 246.

[3] See Appendix G.

Finally there is a poet whom Pasquier places among the *arrière-garde* of the poetic army, and D'Aubigné in the *seconde volée*, but who should rather be classed with the contemporaries of Ronsard. This is Amadis Jamyn. It is true that he did not make his public *début* till 1574, the close of the period of Ronsard's activity, but he had written much of his poetry before this date, being then thirty-six, or according to some authorities, thirty-eight[1]. He was closely attached to Ronsard, who had made him his page and given him a good classical education, on the strength of which he completed Salel's translation of the *Iliad* and translated three books of the *Odyssey*[2]. It was partly perhaps from his study of Homer that he learnt the art of writing dignified French verse with ease and precision. Better almost than any of Ronsard's followers he has caught the tone of lofty concentration proper to the sonnet. The following except for two rather bad lines, the second and the third, is excellent in point of style:

Le Nocher qui longtemps dessus les flots venteux
Sur la mer ha souffert maint different orage,
Est aise quand il voit la terre et le riuage,
Eschapé des hazards et des vents perilleux.
Il apelle, il saluë, aueq vn cœur joyeux
Le port bien asseuré: puis loing de tout naufrage
Il passe doucement auprès de son mesnage
Le reste de ses ans desia foibles et vieux.
Ainsi après auoir dedans la mer mondaine
Passé mille périls en differente peine,
Bonnet se resiouit à l'heure de sa mort;
Pour ne deuoir plus rien à quelqu'vn des celestes,
Il se mit volontiers souz les ombres funestes
Et le trespas certain luy sembla comme vn port[3].

But there is little warmth or imagination in Jamyn's work and he is far too fond of those Petrarchian conceits, especially

[1] Born in 1538 or 1540 at Chaource about 20 miles to the south of Troyes. He was thus only six or at the most eight years younger than Baïf. He died in 1592 or 93.

[2] Salel had translated twelve books and part of the thirteenth. Jamyn began his work at Book xii. which with the four following books was published in 1574. The whole *Iliad*, by Salel and Jamyn, appeared in 1580, and again, with the addition of three books of the *Odyssey*, in 1584.

[3] Ed. C. Brunet, I. 127.

the over-elaboration of a single metaphor, which his master and the majority of his followers had by this time almost entirely abandoned. This failing is fatal to his songs, and becomes tiresome in his sonnets. In the following it may perhaps be pardoned for the novelty of the metaphor, which possibly however is not of his own invention:

Voyant les combatans de la Balle forcee
Merquez de iaune et blanc l'vn l'autre terracer,
Pesle-mesle courir, se battre, se pousser,
Pour gaigner la victoire en la foule pressee:
Ie pense que la Terre à l'égal balancee
Dedans l'air toute ronde, ainsi fait amasser
Les hommes aux combats, à fin de renverser
Ses nourriçons brulans d'vne gloire insensée.
La Balle ha sa rondeur toute pleine de vent:
Pour du vent les mortels font la guerre souuent,
Ne rapportant du ieu que la Mort qui les domte,
Car tout ce monde bas n'est qu'vn flus et reflus,
Et n'apprennent iamais à toute fin de conte,
Sinon que cette vie est vn songe et rien plus[1].

Another feature of Jamyn's work, which is not strictly a literary one, but which is worth noticing because he shares it in common with most of the members of his school, is the servility of his attitude towards his royal patrons. It is not that he could say of Catharine de' Medici, *Ses vertus l'ont assise au rang des Immortels*, for that was in accordance with a well-understood literary fiction, nor that he wrote love-sonnets for Charles IX (*Amours d'Eurymedon et de Callirée*), but his poems on the *mignons* of Henry III (*Sonnets du deuil de Cleophon*, *Complainte de Cleophon*, etc.)[2], which the worthy Colletet could not read without tears, surpass the limits of permissible complaisance. They were an insult to the good taste and the good feeling of the nation. It was this subservience on the part of the Pleiad poets to the vices of the court which specially stirred the indignation of the Protestants, and led by the force of reaction to the more manly poetry of Du Bartas and D'Aubigné. But before proceeding to consider the new

[1] Ed. Brunet, I. 51; translated by Cary, *op. cit.* p. 267.

[2] Published in the volume of 1584. See P. de L'Estoile, *Journal*, I. 295.

developements which began to shape themselves after the year 1574, it will be well to pause and consider the value of the work done by Ronsard and his contemporaries.

3. *The work of the Pleiad.*

The first great achievement of the Pleiad was the introduction of a higher conception of the functions of poetry than had prevailed in France for nearly three centuries. Of the higher possibilities of poetry Marot had only a glimmer, while Scève and Margaret of Navarre, though their conception was sufficiently lofty, practically lacked the accomplishment of verse. The confidence therefore with which Du Bellay proclaimed his belief in the future of French poetry and in its capacity to deal with the highest themes was of the greatest importance. It was of equal importance that he pointed to the classical and the Italian languages as witnesses to what poetry might achieve, and as furnishing models for the study and emulation of Frenchmen. It is true that the Pleiad by no means learnt all the lessons that the great classical masterpieces have to teach. They learnt neither economy nor restraint; nor did they learn that all great poetry springs from the direct observation of life. But they did learn this—that the language and the style of poetry are different from those of prose[1]. This was the capital theory of the Pleiad, the theory round which all their reforms centred, whether in vocabulary, in syntax, in style, or in versification[2].

[1] *Le style prosaïque est ennemi capital de l'éloquence poëtique* (Ronsard in first preface to the *Franciade*). A. Rosenbauer, *Die poetischen Theorien der Plejade*, well points out that the reform of the Pleiad consisted in the substitution of poetic style for rhyme as the principal aim of poetry (p. 97). It will be remembered how Wordsworth's theory that 'between the language of prose and that of metrical composition there neither is nor can be any essential difference' is demolished once for all by Coleridge in his *Biographia litteraria* (II. cc. 14—20), largely by help of Wordsworth's own poetry.

[2] The theories of the Pleiad are to be found not only in Du Bellay's *Deffence* and preface to the 2nd ed. of *Olive*, but in Ronsard's *Abrégé de l'art poëtique*, published in 1565 (*Œuvres*, VII. 317 ff.), and in his two prefaces to the *Franciade* (*ib.* III.). See also Marty-Laveaux, *La langue de la Pléiade*, and L. Mellerio, *Lexique de Ronsard.*

As regards the reforms in vocabulary, so far is it from true that 'the muse of Ronsard spoke Greek and Latin' that except in his earliest work one has to search diligently before finding a Greek or a Latin word. In reality the methods which Du Bellay and Ronsard indicated for the enrichment of the poetic vocabulary were twofold: (i) the adoption of existing words hitherto neglected, such as archaisms, provincialisms and the technical terms of various trades[1]; (ii) the formation of new words whether from Greek or Latin, or from French sources. To the formation from disused French words Ronsard gave the picturesque name of *provignement*, the technical term for the layering of plants[2]. Now all these methods of adding to the vocabulary are perfectly legitimate, and it only depends upon whether they are used with discretion. This discretion Ronsard and Du Bellay not only preached, but on the whole practised. Whether they would have done so without the criticisms that were freely directed against their youthful essays is another matter; and it is noteworthy that Ronsard in one of the last poems he ever wrote, the *Caprice à Simon Nicolas*[3], says as boldly as Du Bellay in the *Deffence*:

> Promeine-toy dans les plaines Attiques,
> Fay nouveaux mots, r'appelle les antiques,
> Voy les Romains, et destiné du ciel,
> Desrobe, ainsi que les mouches à miel,
> Leurs belles fleurs par les Charites peintes.
> Lors sans viser aux jalouses attaintes
> Des mal-vueillans, formes-en les douceurs
> Que Melpomene inspire dans les cœurs!
> J'ay fait ainsi: toutesfois ce vulgaire,
> A qui jamais je n'ay peu satisfaire,
> Ny n'ay voulu, me fascha tellement
> De son japper en mon advenement,

[1] *Tu n'oublieras les noms propres des outils de tous mestiers et prendras plaisir à t'enquerir le plus que tu pourras, et principalement de la chasse.* (Ronsard, *Abrégé*, *Œuvres*, VII. 321.)

[2] *Si les vieux mots abolis par usage ont laissé quelque rejetton,...tu le pourras provigner.* (*Preface sur la Franciade*, *ib.* III. 33.) Cf. *Abrégé*, VII. 335. For Du Bellay's views on vocabulary see *Deffence*, II. c. vi.

[3] *Œuvres*, VI. 326. The reference to Henry of Navarre as the heir to the throne shews that it must have been written after the death of Alençon in June 1584. It was not published in Ronsard's lifetime.

Quand je hantay les eaux de Castalie,
Que nostre langue en est moins embellie ;
Car elle est manque, et faut de l'action
Pour la conduire à sa perfection.

Indeed some of his followers, especially Baïf, were not so ready to submit to the compromise which common sense dictated. But whatever were Ronsard's reasons the number of words of Greek or Latin formation which he invented and which have since dropped out of the vocabulary is relatively very small[1]. On the other hand he drew far more largely from the older French language, but the majority of his archaic introductions failed to keep their place. He is not however the only poet against whom this charge can be brought.

The reforms of the Pleiad in the matter of syntax are less defensible. There is nothing to object to in the compound epithets formed with a verb and a substantive, such as *porte-lance* and *rase-terre*[2], but the attempt to force French syntax into a classical mould by such methods as the use of the adjective as an adverb was doomed to failure. These however were not peculiar to the Pleiad; Rabelais, for instance, practised them freely.

Passing from vocabulary and syntax to the general question of style it must be noticed that the Pleiad in their endeavours to create a poetical style distinct from that of prose somewhat overshot the mark. They were too fond of periphrasis, and they were too much afraid of using common words[3]. Unfortunately it was just these exaggerations of their theory which commended themselves to the unpoetical minds of their

[1] M. Mellerio reckons two or three hundred, including proper names and their derivates and compound adjectives formed in the Greek fashion, in over 80,000 lines. (*op. cit.* p. xlvi.) In Marty-Laveaux's glossary of the Pleiad, which, though it does not pretend to be exhaustive, may be taken as representative, Greek words occupy 40 pages, Latin 76, archaisms 142, and technical terms 61.

[2] For these compounds see H. Estienne, *Precellence*, pp. 152 ff.

[3] *Exemple des mauvais vers :*

Madame, en bonne foy, je vous donne mon cœur ;
N'usez point envers moy, s'il vous plaist, de rigueur.

Efface cœur *et* rigueur, *tu ne trouveras un seul mot qui ne soit vulgaire ou trivial.* (Ronsard, *Pref. sur la Franciade*, III. 30.)

successors. On the other hand the essential part of their reform, the cultivation of the imagination, was entirely overlooked. For the work of the Pleiad may be described even more accurately as the creation of imaginative poetry than as the creation of noble poetry[1].

The defects of the school are tolerably obvious. In the first place the writers studied literature too much, and life too little. It was literature, and not life, which inspired many of their happiest efforts[2]. They would probably have argued that so long as the style was their own it did not matter if the ideas were borrowed. Unfortunately even the style of many of the lesser writers is not so much their own as one common to the whole school.

A second defect, which is closely allied to the first, is the contempt which they entertained and expressed for the unlearned multitude. Bastier de la Peruse was only voicing the sentiments of the whole school when he wrote:

J'ay caché dix mille vers
Pleins de graces nompareilles,
Qui ne seront descouvers
Que pour les doctes oreilles.
Le vulgaire populace
Ne merite telle grace,
Et la grand' tourbe ignorante
N'est digne qu'on les luy chante:
Car Apollon ne veut pas
Que celuy qu'il favorise
Ses vers divins profanise
Les chantant au peuple bas[3].

But the greatest poetry appeals alike to the learned and the unlearned. While Ronsard and his disciples successfully vindicated the claims of the vernacular language to a

[1] The services of the Pleiad to versification have already been pointed out in connexion with Ronsard, to whom they were chiefly due.

[2] The theory of imitation, which Du Bellay preaches so imperiously in the *Deffence*, is stated in a more moderate form in his preface to *L'Olive*; and more moderately still by Peletier in his *Art Poëtique*: *Par seule imitation rien ne se fait grand: c'est le fait d'un homme paresseux et de peu de cœur, de marcher tousjours apres un autre.* (Cited by Chamard, p. 24.)

[3] *Œuvres choisies des poètes français du xvi^e siècle*, p. 150.

hearing, they failed through a want of sympathy with the pulse of the nation to create a thoroughly national poetry. From one obvious blemish at any rate they would have been saved by a greater regard for the *grand' tourbe ignorante*, and that is from the abuse of classical learning and classical mythology, in a word from the pedantry which is only another form of provincialism.

Thirdly, in spite of their too exclusive devotion to form their execution is often careless. They are too easily satisfied with their work, they lack the habit of rigorous self-criticism. Claiming to be above all things artists, they forget that an essential quality of a true artist is perfect craftmanship. From this reproach, indeed, Belleau, and to a considerable extent Ronsard, must be excepted. And even with the majority of Ronsard's followers it is chiefly in their execution of longer pieces that they fail. They can take pains with a sonnet or a short lyric, but when it comes to a more prolonged effort they lose patience, and scamp their work. They did not realise that that immortality for which they all thirsted, and to which the least among them looked forward with such confident expectation, is not to be had on so easy terms. Yet Du Bellay, though he did not always practise what he preached, had warned them that *qui desire vivre en la memoire de la Posterité, doit, comme mort en soy mesme, suer et trembler maintesfois*[1].

It is not merely that they allow themselves too much licence in language and versification. This is a comparatively venial fault. But they write too fluently and too easily, without having sufficiently refined their ideas in the crucible of imagination, without having transmuted the rough ore into the gold of poetry. They go on writing after their inspiration is exhausted, and as a rule inspiration comes to them only in short breaths.

These then are the defects of the school as a whole, the substitution of literature for life as the source of inspiration, the want of sympathy with the thoughts and aims of the nation at large, and a lack of rigorous self-criticism. And

[1] *Deffence*, II. c. iii.

the very fact of its being a school helped to produce these defects, for solidarity is a hindrance to originality, and mutual admiration is fatal to self-criticism. On the other hand we must not forget that the repetition of the same defects in so many writers forces them upon our attention. It is by its best work and not by its failures that the Pleiad must in all fairness be judged. If it has produced no great national poem, if even its best work is neither deeply passionate nor daringly imaginative, it has enriched poetry with many examples of rare beauty and excellence, models of grace and harmony.

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE SECOND GENERATION

We have seen that the founders of the Pleiad had sat at the feet of the Greek professor, Jean Dorat, and had imbibed from his stimulating lectures a boundless enthusiasm for the masterpieces of Greek literature. We have seen that Ronsard's most cherished models, at any rate in theory, were Homer and Pindar, and that in the original preface to the *Franciade* he professed to have modelled his work rather on the *naïve* spontaneity (*facilité*) of Homer than on the careful (*curieuse*) diligence of Virgil[1]. Yet in the *Franciade* the imitation of Virgil is in reality more conspicuous than that of Homer, and in the posthumous preface which treats of the heroic poem in general Homer is barely mentioned, while Virgil and his 'divine *Æneid*' are praised to the skies[2]. What were the causes of this change in his ideals?

In the first place it was due to the simple fact that the French nation belongs to the Latin race. The affinities which Henri Estienne pointed out between the French and the Greek language do no doubt exist, though they are scarcely those on which he insists; but at bottom the character alike of language and literature is essentially Latin. Thus when after half-a-century of Hellenism that process of Latinisation, which had begun as far back as the fourteenth century, once more resumed its natural course, French literature returned as it were from its foster parent to its natural mother. Even from the first the poets of the Pleiad had drunk largely of

[1] *Œuvres*, III. 9. [2] *ib.* 22 ff.

Latin inspiration. We have seen how important a part both the vernacular and the neo-Latin poetry of Italy had played in their developement, and that one among them at least, Joachim du Bellay, not only turned by preference to Latin models, but in his warm feelings, his passionate eagerness, his observation of the outward aspect of things, was at heart a true Latin.

Thus the phase of Hellenic influence, all important though it was while it lasted, was of short duration. Being an exotic it required artificial care, and this care, owing to the rapid decay of Greek scholarship in France, was now withdrawn. Partly as the result of the civil wars the study of Greek in France began rapidly to decline after the fatal year 1572, and to be confined more and more to a narrow circle of scholars. "Frenchmen," says Ronsard in the posthumous preface referred to above, "have more knowledge of Virgil than of Homer and other Greek authors[1]."

Now this decline in the prestige of Greek coincides more or less with the retirement of Ronsard from the Court in 1574, and so this event, which practically closed Ronsard's poetical career, may be taken to mark the close also of the first epoch of the Pleiad. From this time the uniformity of aim and the solidarity of purpose which had characterised the work of Ronsard and his more immediate contemporaries begins to disappear, and new developements arise. It was not that the younger poets consciously renounced any of the poetical doctrines of the school, or ceased to regard Ronsard as 'the prince of poets,' but by the natural process of time some practices came to be exaggerated, and others to be modified, with the result that the stream of poetry which had hitherto flowed in one broad channel now diverged into separate currents. Of these currents the two principal ones are those which are associated with the names of Du Bartas and Desportes. Both making their first public appearance as original poets in the year 1573, both ardent admirers and close disciples of Ronsard, both exaggerating some of the

[1] See F. Brunetière, *L'évolution des genres*, 1890, pp. 51—53, but in my opinion he attributes too much weight to the influence of Scaliger's *Poetice*.

defects of the school while leading a reaction against others, they are at the same time alike in conception and execution the complete opposites of each other.

1. *Du Bartas.*

Guillaume de Salluste, seigneur du Bartas, was born at Montfort, near Auch, the old capital of Gascony, in the year 1544. While the poets with whom we have hitherto been concerned revolved round Paris and the Court and were warm partisans of the Catholic cause, Du Bartas was at once a provincial and a Protestant, two circumstances which in themselves tended to differentiate his work from that of his fellow poets. But so far as literary doctrines went he was an ardent disciple of the Pleiad, and his first serious production was a response to Du Bellay's appeal to his countrymen to write an epic poem. Though *Judith*, as Du Bartas' epic was called, was written in 1565, when its author was only about twenty-one, it did not appear till 1573, in a volume published at Bordeaux and entitled *La Muse Chrestienne.* Its subject, as well as the title of the volume in which it appeared, already indicates one element of opposition to the orthodox Ronsardists. It is true that the subject was imposed on Du Bartas by Jeanne d'Albret, the Queen of Navarre, but he was quite well aware of its novelty, and in the preface he speaks of himself as the first French writer to treat of a sacred subject in a long poem. In another poem of *La Muse Chrestienne*, entitled *Uranie* or *Muse céleste*, he represents the Muse as inveighing against those who profane the divine use of poetry by applying it to frivolous and immoral purposes :

> Je ne puis d'un œil sec voir que l'on mette en vente
> Nos divines chansons et que d'un flateur vers,
> Pour gagner la faveur des Princes plus pervers,
> Un Commode, un Neron, un Caligule on vante.

She bids him devote himself to religious poetry, and accordingly in obedience to this call he produced in 1578 a long poem on the Creation entitled *La Semaine.* It was received with enormous enthusiasm. Twenty editions were published

in five years, and it was translated into several languages. The French Protestants were especially loud in its praise. They welcomed it as a counterpoise to the semi-pagan and frivolous Court poetry of Ronsard and his immediate followers, which had recently culminated in the apotheosis of the *mignons* by Desportes and Jamyn. They proclaimed Du Bartas to be Ronsard's superior, and even whispered that Ronsard himself had acknowledged the fact. In a fine sonnet the elder poet indignantly denied both assertions:

Ils ont menty, D'Aurat, ceux qui le veulent dire,
Que Ronsard, dont la Muse a contenté les Rois,
Soit moins que le Bartas, et qu'il ait par sa voix
Rendu ce tesmoignage ennemy de sa lyre!
Ils ont menti, D'Aurat! si bas je ne respire;
Je sçay trop qui je suis, et mille et mille fois
Mille et mille tourmens pluſtost je souffrirois,
Qu'un adveu si contraire au nom que je desire.
Ils ont menty, D'Aurat! c'est une invention
Qui part, à mon advis, de trop d'ambition.
J'auroy menty moy-mesme en le faisant paroistre;
Francus en rougiroit, et les neuf belles Sœurs
Qui tremperent mes vers dans leurs graves douceurs,
Pour un de leurs enfans ne me voudroient cognoistre[1].

In 1584 Du Bartas began the publication of *La seconde Semaine*. It was to be a vast poem representing the Biblical history of humanity down to the Last Judgment. The first instalment contained two Days, each Day being divided into four parts. But the poem was never finished. When it was published after Du Bartas's death, the fourth Day, which was to end with the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, was still incomplete.

The work had been interrupted by more pressing occupations. From 1586 Du Bartas was employed by the King of Navarre on various missions, including one in 1587 to England and Scotland. In the latter country he received a warm welcome from the royal pedant, James VI, who had translated his *Urania*[2], and who now wrote to congratulate his

[1] Ronsard, *Œuvres*, v. 348.

[2] Apparently about 1585, though it was not published till 1591; it is printed

brother of Navarre on having in his service so rare and virtuous a person[1]. On his return to France Du Bartas commanded a troop of horse and saw some fighting. His last poem was written to celebrate the victory of Ivry, in which, however, he did not take part. In the following July (1590) he died from over-fatigue and neglected wounds[2]. He was a sincere, modest and high-minded gentleman[3].

After his death his renown steadily decreased. The magnificent folio edition of his works published at Paris in 1611 may, to use Sainte-Beuve's words, be regarded as their tomb. It is true that a later edition was published at Geneva in 1632 and that Joshua Sylvester's translation was very popular in England[4] down to the Restoration[5], but this was in Protestant countries. In France Du Bartas was ignored by Boileau as he already had been ignored by Malherbe, and there has been no real reversal of this verdict. *Notre Milton manqué*[6] is the most recent appreciation that has been passed on him, and it aptly expresses at once the grandeur and nobility of his aims and the failure of his accomplishment.

There can be little question as to the actual merits and defects of Du Bartas's work, however critics may differ in striking the balance. It consists of fine passages interspersed among long wastes of dull and tiresome poetry. Even the best passages are generally blemished by serious errors in taste. But they are marked by elevation of thought, vigour

in Arber's *English Reprints*. It was by order of James that T. Hudson translated *Judith* (1582).

[1] Letter from James VI of Scotland to the King of Navarre (printed by T. de Larroque, *Vies des poètes gascons*, p. 96).

[2] De Thou, x. ix.

[3] De Thou, xcix. xvii, speaks of his modesty and candour.

[4] "There be some French poets which afford excellent entertainment, especially Du Bartas," Howell's *Foreign Travel*, 1650.

[5] Sylvester translated the *Cantique d'Ivry* in 1590, and fragments of the *Seconde Semaine* in 1592. The first collected edition of his various translations of Du Bartas appeared in 1605–6, and a nearly complete edition in 1621 under the title of *Du Bartas, his divine Weekes and Works with a Compleate Collection of all the other most delightful Workes* translated and written by y^e^ famous Philomusus, Joshua Sylvester, Gent. (printed by Humphray Lownes). There is a copy of this edition in the Cambridge University Library, but not in the Brit. Mus.

[6] P. Morillot in Petit de Julleville, III. 225.

and movement, and above all by imagination of the highest order, the imagination which is at once lofty and penetrative, which can soar to transcendental heights, or illumine with a touch the ordinary phenomena of nature. Such are the description of the winds and of the signs of God's power in the second Day of *La Semaine*, the praise of Gascony and of country life in the third Day.

But imagination is not the quality which appeals most strongly to French critics. On the other hand they are more keenly alive than any foreign critic is likely to be to the defective execution, the signs of provincialism and bad taste which are too common in Du Bartas's work. Even supposing that his execution had been uniformly good he would still have failed to write a good epic poem. It is not surprising that his youthful production, *Judith*, should shew neither power of characterisation nor knowledge of mankind. But even in this first attempt it is significant that he is at his best in descriptive and rhetorical passages, and at his worst in narrative. So in the *Semaine*, the subject of which was better suited to him because it does not deal with human beings, the narrative is confused, and the general composition bad. There is too much learning, too much accumulation of detail; the poem often degenerates into a scientific primer, or becomes a mere catalogue of names. *La seconde Semaine*, in which the author's faults are exaggerated, is a mere encyclopædia[1]. No, Du Bartas could never have become an epic poet[2].

But he might have written a poem like the *Georgics*. He had the moral earnestness of Virgil, and he had the same passionate attachment to his native land, to the actual land itself. Moreover in his descriptions of nature he surpasses the other poets of the Pleiad school, even Ronsard and Belleau, not only in imaginative breadth, but in the accuracy

[1] For the analogy between the *Seconde Semaine* and Scève's *Microcosme*, see Pellissier, pp. 79 ff.

[2] It should be pointed out that Du Bartas himself says that the *Semaine* is not a true epic poem, but is in part panegyrical, in part prophetic, in part didactic (Preface).

of his observation. It is characteristic that, while the other poets with wearisome iteration compare human life to the rose, he should have chosen the flax, a much shorter-lived flower, for his simile:

La fleur du lin qui naist et tombe
Tout en un même jour.

The following description of a 'bleeding' vine testifies to his knowledge of country pursuits:

Comme le sarment
Qu'on a taillé trop tard distille lentement
Mainte larme emperlée.

As specimens of his style in longer passages we may take one from the well-known description of the rival nightingales, and one from the praise of country life:

O Dieu! combien de fois sous les feuilleus rameaus
Et des chesnes ombreus et des ombreus ormeaus,
J'ay taché marier mes chansons immorteles
Aux plus mignars refrains de leurs chansons plus beles.
Il me semble qu'encor j'oy dans un vert buisson
D'un sçavant rossignol la tremblante chanson:
Qui tenant or la taille, ores la haute-contre,
Or le mignard dessus, ore la basse-contre,
Or toutes quatre ensemble, apele par le bois
Au combat des neuf Sœurs les mieus disantes vois.
A trente pas de là, sous les feuilles d'un charme
Un autre rossignol redit le mesme carme,
Puis volant avec luy pour l'honneur etriver
Chante quelque motet pourpensé tout l'hiver.
Le premier luy replique, et d'un divin ramage
Ajoute à son dous chant passage sur passage,
Fredon dessus fredon, et leurs gosiers plaintifs
Dependent toute l'aube en vers alternatifs[1].

O trois et quatre fois heureus cil qui s'eloigne
Des troubles citadins, qui, prudent, ne se soigne
Des emprises des Rois: ains servant à Cerés,
Remuë de ses bœufs les paternels guerés.
La venimeuse dent de la blafarde Envie,
Ni l'avare Souci ne travaillent sa vie,

[1] *Œuvres*, ed. 1611, p. 153.

Des bornes de son champ son desir est borné...
Les trompeurs Chicaneurs (harpies des parquets
Et sangsuës du peuple) avecques leurs caquets,
Bavardement facheus, la teste ne lui rompent:
Ains les peints oiselets les plus durs ennuis trompent,
Enseignant chasque jour aux dous-flairans buissons
Les plus divins couplets de leurs douces chansons...
Passant dans le repos tous les jours de son aage,
Il ne perd tant soit peu de veuë son vilage,
Ne connoit autre mer, ne sçait autre torrent
Que le flot cristalin du ruisseau murmurant
Qui ses verts prés arrose: et cette mesme terre
Qui naissant le receut, pitoyable l'enterre[1].

The second passage is inspired by three well-known *loci classici* on the same subject, the *Beatus ille qui procul negotiis* of Horace, the *O fortunatos nimium* of the second *Georgic*, and the speech of Hippolytus in Seneca's *Phædra*[2]. The direct reminiscences of Horace and Seneca are more numerous than those of Virgil, but the genuine emotion which sustains the whole passage and prevents it from being a mere patchwork shews that Du Bartas is at one with the poet of the *Georgics*.

It will be noticed that both passages are unusually free from the bad taste which disfigures so much of Du Bartas's work. But the epithet *dous-flairans* reminds us that one of the reproaches most frequently and on the whole most justly brought against him was that he exaggerated the innovations of the Pleiad in the matter of vocabulary, and especially in the use of compound epithets. In the preface which he prefixed to the *Seconde Semaine*[3] he admits in answer to his critics that he had used these epithets somewhat freely in the first *Semaine*, but he defends himself on the ground that they often save a whole line, or even two[4]. No doubt that is what happens to all writers who use compound epithets and other neologisms; they call it economy of

[1] *Œuvres*, p. 240.
[2] See for references to the parallel passages Pellissier, *op. cit.* 142 ff.
[3] In the 1610–11 edition it is printed as a preface to the original *Semaine*.
[4] See Pellissier, *op. cit.* 185 ff.

language, whereas more often it is economy of thought. But it is a practice which can only be justified by success, and to ensure this the epithet should be such as to impress itself vividly upon the imagination.

Another innovation which Du Bartas claims as his own invention is the reduplication of words for the sake of increased effect, such as *flo-flotter*, *ba-battre*, *sou-souffler*, *bra-branler*. Though he uses these very sparingly[1], their existence at all is sufficient to shew that he was utterly wanting in one of the essentials of self-criticism, a sense of the ridiculous. It is from a lack of this sense that the fine panegyric on France at the close of *Les colonies*, the third part of the second Day of the *Seconde Semaine*, degenerates into an expression of gratitude at the absence of crocodiles, lions, and hippopotamuses. However, as Du Bartas's patriotism is a note which is a distinguishing feature not only of his own poetry but of much of the literature of the last twenty years of the sixteenth century, my final selection shall be the lines which immediately precede this lamentable conclusion :

O mille et mille fois terre heureuse et feconde !
O perle de l'Europe ! ô Paradis du monde !
France, je te salue, ô mere des guerriers !
Qui jadis ont planté leurs triomphans lauriers
Sur les rives d'Euphrate, et sanglanté leur glaive
Où la torche du jour et se couche et se leve :
Mere de tant d'ouvriers, qui d'un hardi bon-heur,
Taschent comme obscurcir de Nature l'honneur :
Mere de tant d'esprits, qui de sçavoir espuisent
Egypte, Grece, Rome, et sur les doctes luisent
Comme un jaune esclattant sur les pasles couleurs,
Sur les astres Phœbus, et sa fleur sur les fleurs.

Another Gascon poet of some repute in his day was Pierre de Brach[2], a native of Bordeaux. He was a common friend of Montaigne and Du Bartas. He made the latter's acquaintance at the University of Toulouse, and one of his most pleasing poems, an account of a tour in Gascony which the two young men made together, contains a description of

[1] Pellissier, *op. cit.* 188 f.

[2] b. 1547. The date of his death is not known, but he was alive in 1604.

the *château* of Bartas[1]. Brach's poetry is of the kind that a high-minded, well-educated, intelligent man, with some gift for versification, might be expected to write in a poetic age. It is well-expressed, easy, and fairly harmonious; but it stops short of being real poetry, for the breath of inspiration is wanting. Yet to the author's friends he seemed a real poet, for Florimond de Raemond, the Catholic historian of Protestantism, after regretting that his own want of practice prevented him from paying a tribute of verse to Montaigne's memory, adds that "only the singer of Aimée could do justice to so rich a theme[2]." De Brach indeed busied himself with Montaigne's fame, but in a more useful manner than that suggested by his friend. As the editor of the posthumous edition of the *Essays*, he has earned the gratitude of posterity, and this, rather than his poetry, is his chief title to remembrance. Besides his original work he translated Tasso's *Aminta*[3] and four cantos of *Jerusalem Delivered*[4].

Of greater importance is Guy du Faur de Pibrac, whom Montaigne, after recording his recent death in 1584, describes as *un esprit si gentil, les opinions si saines, les mœurs si douces*[5]. He was born at Toulouse in 1529 in the same year as Estienne Pasquier, whose intimate friend he became. After a thorough education in the humanities and jurisprudence, under Bunel, Cujas, and Alciati, he entered the magistracy, when he was little more than twenty, as a councillor of the Parliament of Toulouse. In 1562 he represented Charles IX at the Council of Trent, and the rest of his life was spent in the service of the Crown. It was owing to his representations that Baïf's Academy was revived by Henry III under the name of the Académie du Palais[6]. He was a man of brilliant parts

[1] Ed. Dézeimeris, II. 176 ff.

[2] Goujet, XIII. 330. *Aimée* was the poetical name of the lady to whom Brach's love-sonnets were addressed, and who became his wife. Her real name was Anne. Colletet says in his life of Brach that "he made her name so famous that all France knew it."

[3] Published in his *Imitations*, Bordeaux, 1584.

[4] Paris, 1596.

[5] *Essais*, III. ix.

[6] See Fremy, *op. cit.* 83 ff.

and high character, but with a strain of weakness which led him to write an apology for the massacre of St Bartholomew[1]. He had a great reputation as an orator, but he is best known by his moral quatrains, first published in 1574, which enjoyed an enormous popularity down to nearly the middle of the eighteenth century[2]. They were translated into various languages, including Persian, Arabic, and Turkish, and were committed to memory by several generations of schoolgirls and schoolboys. Pibrac had had the good sense or the good fortune to choose a form of poetry which did not require any higher poetic gift than that of vigorous and concentrated expression :

Ce que tu vois de l'homme n'est pas l'homme,
C'est la prison où il est enserré,
C'est le tombeau où il est enterré,
Le lict branlant où il dort un court somme.
. . . . . .

Hausse les yeux : la voute suspendue,
Ce beau lambris de la couleur des eaux,
Ce rond parfaict de deux globes jumeaux,
Ce firmament esloigné de la veue,

Bref, ce qui est, qui fut, et qui peut estre,
En terre, en mer, au plus caché des cieux,
Si tost que Dieu l'a voulu pour le mieux,
Tout aussi tost il a receu son estre.
. . . . . .

Le sage est libre enferré de cent chaines.
Il est seul riche, et jamais estranger :
Seul assuré au milieu du danger,
Et le vray Roy des fortunes humaines[3].

[1] *Ornatissimi cuiusdam Viri de Rebus Gallicis ad Stanislaum Elvidium Epistola*, 1573. Pibrac adopted the official explanation that the original cause of the massacre was a plot against the Crown by Coligny and his friends, and that Charles IX ordered only the conspirators to be put to death, but could not restrain the fury of the populace. In a letter to Sir Philip Sidney, Hubert Languet partially defends Pibrac, saying that he wrote the apology to save his own life. (*The Correspondence of Sidney and Languet*, ed. S. A. Pears, 1845, p. 87.)

[2] The first edition containing only 50 quatrains was published in 1574; the first complete edition, containing 126, in 1583. Florent Chrestien translated them into Greek and Latin (1584), Martin Opitz into German, and Joshua Sylvester into English.

[3] Nos. xi, xviii, xix, lix.

The following is quoted by Montaigne in support of his argument against constitutional changes:

Ayme l'estat tel que tu le vois estre:
S'il est royal, ayme la Royauté:
S'il est de peu, ou bien communauté,
Ayme l'aussi, quand Dieu t'y a faict naistre[1].

Pibrac, like Du Bartas, was connected with the Court of Nérac, having been for seventeen months (1579—1581) chancellor to Margaret, the wife of Henry of Navarre. His unfinished poem, *Les plaisirs de la vie rustique*, also reminds one of Du Bartas, for, as we have seen, it is the sort of poem that the latter might successfully have attempted. It contains, as we might expect, many reminiscences of Virgil, and Horace, and other classical writers, but the general treatment shews considerable independence. Interesting pictures of country life, with references to the Court fashions by way of contrast, are interspersed with sketches of peasant character and various autobiographical details. The poem was written in 1573, the very year in which the new representative of the Court poetry, Desportes, published the first collected edition of his poems[2].

2. *Desportes.*

Born at Chartres in 1542 Philippe Desportes found a patron in Antoine de Sennetaire, the Bishop of Le Puy, who took him to Italy. The familiarity which he there acquired with Italian poetry had, as we shall see, a great influence upon his work. On his return to France he became intimate with Claude de l'Aubespine, the son of the well-known statesman, and himself in the employment of Charles IX. Through his good services Desportes became secretary to his brother-in-law, Nicolas de Neufville, Seigneur de Villeroy, who had

[1] No. cix. *Essais*, III. ix. With Pibrac's quatrains were frequently united those of Antoine Favre (1557—1624), a native of Savoy and father of the grammarian Vaugelas, and of Pierre Matthieu (1563—1621).

[2] It was published at Lyons in 1574.

succeeded the elder De l'Aubespine as Secretary of State[1]. In 1572 he presented to Charles IX a free version of part of the *Orlando Furioso* ; another poem derived from the same source, and entitled *La Mort de Rodomont*, procured him a present of eight hundred gold crowns from that ardent lover of poetry. In the following year, 1573, he published his *Premières Œuvres* in a sumptuous volume, which includes most of his works, and in which his style appears to be already fully developed. Soon after its publication he accompanied the Duke of Anjou, to whom he had recommended himself by his ready complaisance, to his new kingdom of Poland. But nine months of that barbarous country were as much as the pleasure-loving poet could endure, and he turned homeward just before the news arrived of the Duke's succession to the throne of France. With Henry III as king, Desportes's star was more than ever in the ascendant. On the death of the two *mignons*, Quélus and Maugiron, as the result of the famous duel of April 26, 1578, he celebrated their virtues, as we have seen, in lines of extravagant flattery[2], and soon afterwards found a new patron in their more powerful successor, Anne de Joyeuse. He now began to receive more substantial marks of favour from his royal master, who conferred on him the abbey of Tiron, in the diocese of Chartres, and that of Bonport, near Rouen. These two benefices alone, and he had several others, brought him in an annual income of 30,000 *livres*[3]. On the death of his patron, Joyeuse, in the battle of Coutras (1587), he retired to Bonport, and when, after the death of Henry III, Normandy was invaded by the royalist army, he took refuge with Villars-Brancas, a relation of Joyeuse, who proceeded to seize Rouen and hold it for the League. Desportes as usual obtained the complete confidence of his

[1] Claude de l'Aubespine the elder died in 1567, the son in 1570, to the great grief of Desportes.

[2] See *Œuvres*, ed. Michiels, p. 315 (*Élégies*, book ii) and p. 477 (epitaph for Maugiron).

[3] See Regnier, *Sat.* ix. 102, and cf. Sainte-Beuve, *Quand on regarde le ciel par une belle nuit, on y découvre étoiles sur étoiles ; plus on regarde dans la vie de Des Portes, et plus on y découvre d'abbayes* (*Tableau*, p. 428 n.).

new patron and helped him considerably with his advice[1]. In the final negotiations between Sully and Villars he proved himself an able diplomatist, and it was partly by his influence that his principal was brought to terms[2]. His own share in the bargain was the restoration of his well-dowered abbeys, with a new one in addition[3]. The rest of his days were spent partly at Bonport, partly at his villa at Vanves in the neighbourhood of Paris. Having enjoyed this world with singular success he now turned his thoughts heavenwards and occupied himself with finishing his translation of the Psalms, of which he had already published sixty in 1591[4]. He was offered the archbishopric of Bordeaux, but declined it on the ground that he did not wish to take upon himself the charge of souls. "But, your monks?" "My monks! they have not any." He was better suited to the part which he preferred to play of a liberal Mæcenas to less fortunate men of letters. His table and his library were always at their service, and he did them many acts of kindness. When he died in 1606 the numerous epitaphs and other panegyrics that were written in his honour were at any rate expressions of genuine regret. No one had envied the prosperity of a man who was as incapable of pride as he was of shame[5].

It is of a piece with Desportes's character, with his talent for utilising all the resources at his command, that he should have been a skilful plagiarist. He avowed it frankly. When at the close of his life some one published a book under the title of *La rencontre des Muses de France et d'Italie*, in which his plagiarisms were set forth, he merely said that the author had better have consulted him, for he could have added to the list[6].

[1] Palma Cayet, *Chronologie novenaire*, 1608, i. 500 r°.

[2] See *Mémoires de Sully*, book vi. It must have been as the *protégé* of Joyeuse that he is called the *poète de l'Amirauté* in the *Satire Ménippée*, for Villars had not been made admiral when it was published.

[3] P. Cayet, *op. cit.* ii. 356 r°.

[4] The complete translation was published at Rouen in 1594.

[5] *J'ay trente mil livres de rente et cependant je meurs* is a remark attributed to him by P. de L'Estoile, who adds that he disbelieved in Purgatory (*Journal*, VIII. 246).

[6] Niceron, XXV. 309; Michiels, p. lxix. Forty-three sonnets were printed with the originals for comparison.

In his *Amours* he is chiefly indebted to the fifteenth-century poet, Antonio Tebaldeo, and to the contemporary Neapolitan writer, Angelo di Costanzo, who conformed in his sonnets rather to the manner of Tebaldeo and Serafino than to the Petrarchian pattern. Several sonnets are imitated or even literally translated from those of Panfilo Sasso, of Modena, another *quattrocentista* of the school of Serafino[1]. These being Desportes's models, we are not surprised to find his sonnets full of extravagant conceits and bristling with point and antithesis. Nor are they fortified by any sincerity of emotion, for Desportes was no better qualified than most of the poets of the Pleiad school to play the part of the spiritual lover. Like Baïf and Magny he writes far better in his true character of a professed libertine. For he was capable of strong, if not durable, emotion, and friendship as well as love could lend warmth to his verse. But just as in practical affairs no emotion obscured for long his marvellous lucidity, so in his poetry the dominant note is *esprit* rather than passion. The following is a good specimen of his wit:

Je l'aimay par dessein, la connoissant volage,
Pour retirer mon cœur d'un lien fort dangereux :
Aussi que je vouloy n'estre plus amoureux
En lieu que le profit n'avançast le dommage.
Je duray quatre mois avec grand avantage,
Goustant tous les plaisirs d'un amant bien-heureux ;
Mais en ces plus beaux jours, ô destins rigoureux !
Le devoir me força de faire un long voyage.
Nous pleurasmes tous deux, puis, quand je fu parti,
Son cœur n'agueres mien fut ailleurs diverti :
Un revint, et soudain luy voilà raliée.
Amour je ne m'en veux ny meurtrir ny blesser ;
Car, pour dire entre nous, je puis bien confesser
Que plus d'un mois devant je l'avois oubliée[2].

Sometimes however the wit is a little overdone, as in the song which begins:

[1] Flamini, *Studi*, pp. 433 ff., and Appendix, *I plagi di Filippo Desportes*. For his debt to Sasso see J. Vianey in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* x. (1903) 277 ff. His *Amours* consist of *Diane*, *Premières amours*, 2 books ; *Amours d'Hippolyte* ; and *Cleonice*, *Dernières amours*, first published in 1583.

[2] *Œuvres*, p. 402. See also *Adieu à la Pologne*, p. 424.

Le mal qui me rend miserable,
Et qui me conduit au trespas,
Est si grand, qu'il est incroyable ;
Aussi vous ne le croyez pas[1].

But there is real imagination in the following sonnet, which is interesting as having furnished our English poet Daniel with some ideas and expressions for his famous sonnet on the same subject[2]:

Sommeil, paisible fils de la nuict solitaire,
Pere-alme, nourricier de tous les animaux,
Enchanteur gracieux, doux oubly de nos maux,
Et des esprits blessez l'appareil salutaire ;
Dieu favorable à tous, pourquoy m'es-tu contraire?
Pourquoy suis-je tout seul rechargé de travaux,
Or' que l'humide nuict guide ses noirs chevaux,
Et que chacun jouyst de ta grace ordinaire?
Ton silence où est-il? ton repos et ta paix,
Et ces songes vollans comme un nuage espais,
Qui des ondes d'oubly vont lavant nos pensées?
O frere de la mort, que tu m'es ennemy!
Je t'invoque au secours, mais tu es endormy,
Et j'ards, toujours veillant, en tes horreurs glacées[3].

It is however in his songs that Desportes really excels. Set to music they were extremely popular in his day, and the merit of many of them is still incontestable. The most famous of all, the one which the Duke of Guise was said to have been humming just before his assassination, is the following:

Rozette, pour un peu d'absence,
Vostre cœur vous avez changé,
Et moy, sçachant cette inconstance,
Le mien autre part j'ay rangé ;
Jamais plus beauté si legere
Sur moy tant de pouvoir n'aura :
Nous verrons, volage bergere,
Qui premier s'en repentira.
Tandis qu'en pleurs je me consume,
Maudissant cet esloignement,
Vous, qui n'aimez que par coustume,
Caressiez un nouvel amant.

[1] *Œuvres*, p. 172.

[2] The epithet 'Care-charmer' and the idea expressed in the last two lines are borrowed from a sonnet by P. de Brach.

[3] *ib.* p. 164.

Jamais legere girouëtte
Au vent si tost ne se vira ;
Nous verrons, bergere Rozette,
Qui premier s'en repentira.
Où sont tant de promesses saintes,
Tant de pleurs versez en partant ?
Est-il vray que ces tristes plaintes
Sortissent d'un cœur inconstant ?
Dieux, que vous estes mensongere !
Maudit soit qui plus vous croira !
Nous verrons, volage bergere,
Qui premier s'en repentira.
Celuy qui a gaigné ma place,
Ne vous peut aimer tant que moy ;
Et celle que j'aime vous passe
De beauté, d'amour et de foy.
Gardez bien vostre amitié neuve,
La mienne plus ne varira,
Et puis nous verrons à l'espreuve,
Qui premier s'en repentira[1].

This has the rapid movement, the lightness of touch, and the lilt of a true song. Not quite so perfect, for there is a touch of conceit in it, but still very good is the following :

Un doux trait de vos yeux, ô ma fiere deesse !
Beaux yeux, mon seul confort,
Peut me remettre en vie et m'oster la tristesse
Qui me tient à la mort.
Tournez ces clairs soleils, et par leur vive flame
Retardez mon trespas :
Un regard me suffit : le voulez-vous, madame ?
Non, vous ne voulez pas.
Un mot de vostre bouche à mon dam trop aimable,
Mais qu'il soit sans courroux,
Peut changer le destin d'un amant miserable,
Qui n'adore que vous.
Il ne faut qu'un ouy, meslé d'un doux sou-rire
Plein d'amours et d'appas :
Mon Dieu ! que de longueurs, le voulez-vous point dire ?
Non, vous ne voulez pas.
Roche sourde à mes cris, de glaçons toute plaine,
Ame sans amitié,
Quand j'estoy moins brûlant, tu m'estois plus humaine
Et plus prompte à pitié.

[1] *Œuvres*, p. 450.

Cessons donc de l'aimer, et, pour nous en distraire,
Tournons ailleurs nos pas.
Mais peut-il estre vray que je le veuille faire?
Non, je ne le veux pas[1].

Another celebrated one is *O Nuict! jalouse Nuict, contre moy conjurée*, imitated from Ariosto[2].

But Desportes can also write well in a graver key. His *Prayer to Sleep*[3] is a good example of his more elevated style, but I prefer to quote the first four stanzas of his song on the praise of country life, for the sake of the comparison with Du Bartas's lines quoted above[4]:

O bien-heureux qui peut passer sa vie
Entre les siens, franc de haine et d'envie,
Parmy les champs, les forests et les bois,
Loin du tumulte et du bruit populaire,
Et qui ne vend sa liberté pour plaire
Aux passions des princes et des rois!
Il n'a soucy d'une chose incertaine,
Il ne se paist d'une esperance vaine,
Nulle faveur ne le va decevant,
De cent fureurs il n'a l'ame embrasée,
Et ne maudit sa jeunesse abusée,
Quand il ne trouve à la fin que du vant.
Il ne fremist, quand la mer courroucée
Enfle ses flots, contrairement poussée
Des vens esmeus, soufflans horriblement;
Et quand la nuict à son aise il sommeille,
Une trompette en sursaut ne l'éveille,
Pour l'envoyer du lict au monument.
L'ambition son courage n'attise;
D'un fard trompeur son ame il ne déguise,
Il ne se plaist à violer sa foy;
Des grands seigneurs l'oreille il n'importune,
Mais en vivant contant de sa fortune,
Il est sa cour, sa faveur et son roy[5].

The expression *du lict au monument* occurs in both writers, but in this case it is not Desportes who is the plagiarist.

[1] *Œuvres*, p. 77.

[2] *ib.* p. 378. Regnier in his satires quotes *O nuit, jalouse nuit*, and the refrain of the song to Rozette, the latter twice.

[3] *ib.* p. 74. [4] *ante*, p. 40. [5] *ib.* p. 431.

His 'spiritual sonnets' are by no means his worst work. They were written after a severe illness, following the death of his friend Claude de l'Aubespine in 1570, and they have the air of being inspired by a real, if temporary, outburst of religious emotion.

Je regrette en pleurant les jours mal employez
A suivre une beauté passagere et muable,
Sans m'eslever au ciel et laisser memorable
Maint haut et digne exemple aux esprits desvoyez.
Toi qui dans ton pur sang nos mesfaits as noyez,
Juge doux, benin pere et sauveur pitoyable,
Las! releve, ô Seigneur! un pecheur miserable,
Par qui ces vrais soupirs au ciel sont envoyez.
Si ma folle jeunesse a couru mainte année
Les fortunes d'amour, d'espoir abandonnée,
Qu'au port, en doux repos, j'accomplisse mes jours,
Que je meure en moy-mesme, à fin qu'en toy je vive,
Que j'abhorre le monde et que, par ton secours,
La prison soit brisée où mon ame est captive[1].

It was not only to Italian authors that Desportes was indebted. The famous Spanish pastoral, the *Diana* of Jorge de Montemôr, which, like its model the *Arcadia*, is written partly in prose and partly in verse, was also laid under contribution. The dialogue beginning *Berger, quelle advanture estrange*, one of the *Bergeries*, is an almost literal translation from it, and the two *Complaintes* in the same group of poems are borrowed from the same source[2]. This debt is interesting because the *Diana* was before long to have a considerable influence upon French literature, and, mingling with the current of Italian pastoral drama, to produce within two years of Desportes's death D'Urfé's famous pastoral romance *L'Astrée*.

It will be seen from the above quotations that the adroitness and tact which served Desportes so well in the affairs of life were also of service to him in his poetry. Beginning to

[1] *Œuvres*, p. 509.

[2] See G. Lanson in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* IV. 61 ff. The *Diana* was published about the year 1559, and was translated into French by Nicolas Colin in 1578. See J. Fitzmaurice-Kelly in *Rev. hispanique*, II. (1895) 304 ff., and Picot, II. no. 1748.

write after the first hot enthusiasm of the new school had begun to cool down, he turned to profit, as he turned everything, the mistakes and exaggerations of his predecessors. There is this much truth in Boileau's well-known lines, that Desportes's style is more restrained (*plus retenu*) than that of some of the original members of the Pleiad, more especially Baïf. Compared with Ronsard's it is far less imaginative, but on the whole it is more lucid. If Desportes's language wants the felicitous charm of really great poetry, if it has neither the logical precision nor the grammatical accuracy which the pedantry of a Malherbe demanded, it is clear, urbane, and correct. In short, if the lack of strong wings prevents Desportes from ever soaring to a high level, his tact stops him from sinking to a low one.

Sainte-Beuve has noticed the striking resemblance between Desportes and Saint-Gelais, not only in their lives, but in their poetry. Desportes is certainly an even more finished specimen of a Court poet than the man who served as the model of Du Bellay's satire, and he resembles him in his cultivation of Italian poetry, and in his use, and sometimes abuse, of *esprit*. But he was a stronger writer than Saint-Gelais, and he had a more genuine poetical endowment. When he is himself, and free from the influence of Italian models, he recalls Saint-Gelais's greater contemporary Marot. For both he and Marot represent more completely than Ronsard the regular tradition of French poetry. They both have the true Frenchman's lucidity, his gaiety mixed with a spice of malice, his good sense, his fear of ridicule. That is why Marot seems in some aspects more modern than Ronsard[1], and why the best work of Desportes has a somewhat modern air.

Desportes seems to have been fairly popular in England, though naturally he had nothing like the vogue of the Protestant Du Bartas. Lodge particularly affected him, and translated, without acknowledgement, his poem on country life, a song beginning

[1] *Marot, par son tour et par son style, semble avoir écrit depuis Ronsard.* La Bruyère, *Les Caractères*, c. i.

La terre naguère glacée
Est ores de vert tapissée,

and a sonnet from *Diane*, *Si je me siez à l'ombre*[1]. Daniel's debt to him has already been noticed.

The *esprit* which flavours Desportes's most characteristic poems is even more strongly represented in the poetry of three men who were frequent visitors at his house, and who were all contributors to the *Satire Ménippée*, Jean Passerat, Gilles Durant, and Nicolas Rapin. Passerat was born in 1534, and published his first volume in 1559, so that as far as age goes he might have been classed with the first generation of the Pleiad. But his more characteristic work is of later date. He was a considerable Latin scholar, his favourite author being Plautus (whom he is said to have read through forty times), and he published a commentary on Catullus, Tibullus, and Propertius. From 1569 he lived in the house of Henri de Mesmes, and in 1572 succeeded Ramus as Royal Professor of Eloquence. He was a sportsman, and wrote a didactic poem on the hound, a tennis player, at which game he lost an eye, and a *bon vivant* with a red face, which malice attributed to his love of the bottle. He was a good Pantagruelist, and wrote a commentary on Rabelais's book, which, on his death-bed, he unfortunately gave to the flames. Towards the end of his life he became paralysed and blind, and after living five years in this condition died in 1602. A collected edition of his poems was published in the same year[2]. The epitaph which he wrote for himself is not the worst among them:

Jean Passerat ici sommeille
Attendant que l'Ange l'esveille:
Et croit qu'il se resveillera
Quand la trompette sonnera.
S'il faut que maintenant en la fosse je tombe,
Qui ay tousjours aimé la paix et le repos,
Afin que rien ne poise à ma cendre, à mes os,
Amis, de mauvais vers ne chargés point ma tombe[3]!

[1] II. no. 3.

[2] The edition of 1606 is much more complete. A small volume of 32 leaves appeared in 1597, entitled *Le premier livre des poemes*.

[3] *Les poésies françaises*, ed. Blanchemain, II. 175.

He excels in these short pieces, and most of those in the *Satire Ménippée* are supposed to be by his hand. Among these the description of the *Politiques* is a model of good-humoured and effective irony:

> Pour connoistre les Politiques,
> Adherents, Fauteurs d'Heretiques,
> Tant soient-ils cachez et couvers,
> Il ne faut que lire ces vers[1].

Of his acknowledged poems the one *Contre les reistres*, the German mercenaries of the Huguenots, is remarkable for its vigour of expression:

> Empistolés au visage noirci,
> Diables du Rhin, n'approchez point d'ici[2].

The chief merit of Passerat's style is his direct simplicity of language, which is absolutely free from the conceits affected by Desportes. This quality shews itself in all Passerat's work, and nowhere better than in the narrative poem called *Metamorphose d'un homme en oiseau*[3], a true *conte* in verse, which in its happy phrasing, at once delicate and vigorous, and its good-humoured malice points backward to Marot and forward to La Fontaine. But he can ally this quality of simple directness just as happily with a note of tender grace as he can with one of vigorous abuse or delicate irony, as for example in his two best-known poems, the *villanelle* and the ode on May-day:

> J'ay perdu ma tourterelle:
> Est-ce point celle que j'oy?
> Je veux aller après elle.
> Tu regrètes ta femelle,
> Hélas! aussi fai-je moy:
> J'ai perdu ma tourterelle.
> Si ton amour est fidelle,
> Aussi est ferme ma foy,
> Je veux aller après elle.
> Ta plainte se renouvelle;
> Tousjours plaindre je me doy:
> J'ay perdu ma tourterelle.

[1] *La Satire Ménippée*, ed. Ch. Read, pp. 220 ff.
[2] *Les poésies franç.* I. 125. [3] *ib.* I. 33.

En ne voyant plus la belle,
Plus rien de beau je ne voy ;
Je veux aller après elle.
Mort, que tant de fois j'appelle,
Pren ce qui se donne à toy :
J'ay perdu ma tourterelle,
Je veux aller après elle[1].

Laissons le lit et le sommeil
Ceste journée :
Pour nous l'aurore au front vermeil
Est desjà née.
Or que le ciel est le plus gay
En ce gracieux mois de may,
Aimons, mignonne ;
Contentons nostre ardent desir :
En ce monde n'a du plaisir
Qui ne s'en donne.

Vien, belle, vien te pourmener
Dans ce bocage,
Entens les oiseaux jargonner
De leur ramage.
Mais escoute comme sur tous
Le rossignol est le plus doux,
Sans qu'il se lasse.
Oublions tout dueil, tout ennuy
Pour nous resjouyr comme luy :
Le temps se passe.

Ce vieillard, contraire aux amans,
Des aisles porte,
Et, en fuyant, nos meilleurs ans
Bien loing emporte.
Quand ridée un jour tu seras,
Mélancolique, tu diras :
J'estoy peu sage,
Qui n'usoy point de la beauté
Que si tost le temps a osté
De mon visage.

Laissons ce regret et ce pleur
A la vieillesse ;
Jeunes, il faut cueillir la fleur
De la jeunesse.

[1] *ib.* II. 83.

Or que le ciel est le plus gay,
En ce gracieux mois de may,
Aimons, mignonne;
Contentons nostre ardent desir:
En ce monde n'a du plaisir
Qui ne s'en donne[1].

In reading the latter poem one does not know whether to wonder most at the skill which is able to weave so graceful a harmony out of so well-worn a theme, or the want of originality which can be satisfied with such familiar expressions as *Aimons, mignonne; Le temps se passe; Quand ridée un jour tu seras; Il faut cueillir la fleur de la jeunesse.* But this repetition of well-worn ideas and phrases is characteristic of most of the love-poetry of the second generation of the Pleiad. We have it again in a poem of Gilles Durant, Passerat's fellow-contributor to the *Satire Ménippée*, beginning *Charlotte, si ton âme,* and in his well-known poem on the sunflower:

J'aime la belle violette,
L'œillet et la pensée aussi;
J'aime la rose vermeillette,
Mais surtout j'aime le soulci[2].

Durant's poems were published in 1587 under the title of *Gayetes amoureuses* in a volume which included some imitations from the Latin of Jean Bonnefons and a group of love poems by the same writer, entitled *Pancharis.* The date of their composition, however, is doubtless some years earlier, for Durant was born at Clermont in 1550[3], four years before his fellow-townsman, Jean Bonnefons. Sainte-Beuve says of him that "neither Passerat nor Ronsard, nor any other poet of the period, has better expressed that feeling of sadness which springs from the very heart of fruition, and those thoughts of death which are everlastingly bound up with the images of pleasure[4]." In this he recalls Olivier de Magny, and probably as in Magny's case the melancholy may be regarded as the

[1] *ib.* I. 143. Translated by A. Lang, *op. cit.* p. 37.
[2] See G. Saintsbury, *Specimens*, p. 130.
[3] He died in 1605.
[4] *Tableau*, p. 126. See also G. Allais, *Malherbe*, pp. 80 ff.

expression rather of a literary commonplace than of any poignant personal feeling. At any rate there is little melancholy in his famous contribution to the *Satire Ménippée*, the poem on the *âne ligueur*, written when, having become like his friend Bonnefons a serious member of society and a distinguished advocate, he had bidden farewell to the poetry of kisses. Its full title is *A Mademoiselle ma commère sur le trespas de son asne.* It is too long to quote in full, but here are two samples:

Un asne doux et débonnaire
Qui n'avoit rien de l'ordinaire,
Mais qui sentoit avec raison
Son asne de bonne maison.

Sa mort fut assez cher vendue,
Car au boucher qui l'acheta
Trente escuz d'or sol il cousta:
Sa chair par membres despecée
Tout soudain en fut dispersée
Au légat, et le vendit on
Pour veau peut estre, ou pour mouton[1].

Nicolas Rapin, grand provost of the constabulary of France, was even less of a professional poet than his friends Passerat and Durant[2]:

Je fais des vers une fois l'an,
Et pour le duché de Milan
Je ne voudrois ni ne souhaite
Qu'on me tint pour un grand poëte.

His French poetry—he also wrote Latin verse—consists chiefly of translations and imitations of Ovid and Horace, especially of the latter's Satires and Epistles, and in these and one or two original pieces he shews the easy unaffected grace of Marot. But his most important and successful poem is *Les plaisirs du gentilhomme champêtre*, which, like Pibrac's poem on the same subject, is an admirable picture of a

[1] See Becq de Fouquières, *Poètes français du xvi^e siècle*, pp. 377 ff. The poem did not appear in the first edition of the *Ménippée*.

[2] Rapin was born at Fontenay-le-Comte in 1540 and died in 1608. The existing *Maison de Terre-neuve* at Fontenay was built for him. His life by Colletet is printed in the *Cabinet historique* for 1871, 235 ff.

country-gentleman's life[1]. He also wrote some poems in classical metres, which are complete failures.

The latest of the amatory poets of the sixteenth century is Michel Guy de Tours, who was born about 1562[2] in the city from which he borrowed an additional surname. His poetry was not published till 1598[3], when, like Gilles Durant, he had become a grave advocate, but it is all exceedingly youthful in character. Even more than Durant's it bears a marked resemblance to much of Magny's work. It shews the same sincerity and youthful ardour as Magny's, the same preoccupation with the material side of love; and if there is less imagination, there is also less conceit and less display of classical learning[4]. There is a good deal of beauty in the following sonnet:

Voici le coudre où ma saincte Angelette
Se vint asseoir pour y prendre le fraiz
Et pour s'armer à l'encontre des raiz
Que le soleil du trebuchet nous gette.
Voici le coudre où je l'a vy seulette,
Où mes deux yeux humerent à longs traiz
Le doux venin qu'enfantent ses attraiz,
Attraiz autheurs de ma flamme secrette.
Ce l'est vrayment, et pour ce, mes Amis,
En reverant la beauté qui m'a mis
L'amour au cœur, beuvons sous sa ramée:
Sus que chacun tarisse jusqu'au fond
Autant de fois ce goubelet profond
Qu'y ay de fois baisé ma bien-aymée[5].

and in an ode on the familiar subject of spring and love which begins:

Maintenant que la belle Flore
Fait tout partout les fleurs éclore

[1] Printed in 1583.

[2] He died after 1611.

[3] Edited by P. Blanchemain, 2 vols. 1878, with some omissions.

[4] A poem on his dog Bistoquet (ed. Blanchemain, II. 79) is evidently inspired by the poems of Du Bellay and Magny on Peloton.

[5] Ed. Blanchemain, I. p. 5; from *Sonnets en faveur de son Ente* (book i of the original edition).

Et que le gay rossignolet
Enfueillé dans une ramée
Va courtisant sa bien-aymée
D'un langage mignardelet[1].

3. *Vauquelin de la Fresnaye.*

From Touraine we pass to Normandy, where in the small town of Vire, the capital of Lower Normandy, we find another lawyer, Maître Jean le Houx, writing drinking songs which he called *Vaux de Vire*. In this he was following the example of a worthy fuller of the same town, Olivier Basselin, who fell fighting against the English in the middle of the fifteenth century either at Fourmigny or in some minor skirmish. Indeed, till recently he was supposed merely to have touched up the work of his predecessor, but M. Armand Gasté has proved conclusively both by internal and external evidence that he was the real author of the songs[2]. It seems curious now that there should ever have been any doubt on the subject, for apart from allusions to sixteenth century events the writer of the *Vaux de Vire* evidently learnt his art in the school of the Pleiad. The variety of his metres is by itself enough to proclaim him a Ronsardist; classical allusions are not wanting, and when but in the age of the Renaissance could the following stanza have been written?

Qui ayme bien le vin est de bonne nature.
Les mortz ne boyvent plus dedans la sepulture.
Hé! qui scait s'il vivra
Peult estre encor demain? Chassons melancholie.
Ie vay boire d'autant à ceste compaignie:
Suyve qui m'aymera[3]!

Apart from the ingenuity which can treat a single theme in so many different fashions, the merit of these songs is not

[1] *ib.* II. 33; from book iv (*en faveur de sa Nerée*).

[2] A. Gasté, *Étude sur Jean le Houx*; and see Muirhead's introduction to his edition of the *Vaux de Vire*. Among other things Gasté shewed that the MS of the *Vaux de Vire* in the Caen library is undoubtedly in the handwriting of Jean le Houx.

[3] Ed. Muirhead, p. 4.

very great. They are especially wanting in the chief requisite of a drinking song, a good swinging melody. The following will serve as a spècimen :

I'avois chargé mon navire
De vins qui estoient tres bons,
Telz comme il les faut a Vire,
Pour boire aux bons compagnons.
Donnez par charité, a boire a ce povre homme marinier,
Qui par tourmente et fortune a tout perdu sur la mer.

Nous estions bonne troupe,
Aymons ce que menions,
Qui ayans le vent en pouppe
L'un a l'aultre en beuvions.
Donnez, etc.

Deia, proches du rivage,
Ayans ben cinq ou six coups,
Nous fismes triste nauffrage
Et ne sauvasmes que nous.
Donnez, etc.

Il fust mieux en nostre gorge
Ce vin que estre en la mer :
Quand chacun chez soy le loge,
Il est hors de tout danger.
Donnez, etc.[1]

The chief representative of the poetic art in Normandy during this period—for Bertaut and Du Perron, though both Normans by birth, had migrated to Paris and were essentially Court poets—is Jean Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, who fitly closes this chapter. For in a way he may be said to sum up the whole work of the Pleiad. Not because by far the greater part of his poetry was not published till the very year 1605 which has been chosen to mark the end of the Renaissance period, for it was mostly written before Ronsard's death ; but because his *Art poétique* is, to borrow Sainte-Beuve's phrase, the official code of the Pleiad, the epilogue to the movement of which the *Deffence* was the prologue[2].

[1] *ib.* p. 56.

[2] *Il...contient...le bilan de la poésie française aux environs de* 1583. P. Morillot in Petit de Julleville, III. 257.

Vauquelin was born at the *château* of Fresnaye, near Falaise, in 1536. After studying the humanities under Turnèbe and Muret at Paris, he read law first at Angers, and then at Poitiers. There, as we have seen, he formed one of a group of young men who neglected law for poetry and looked up to Jacques Tahureau as their master[1]. In 1555, the year after his arrival, he published at Poitiers his *Foresteries*, a very youthful production, inspired partly by a real love of nature, partly by classical literature, and to a large extent modelled on the least valuable portion of Tahureau's poetry, the mawkish *baisers* and *mignardises*. This, however, was his last appearance in print for half-a-century. His volume received encouragement neither from the public nor from his mother—his father had died when he was a boy—and he accordingly betook himself seriously to the study of law under Duaren at Bourges, and so qualified himself to fill the part of a patriotic citizen[2]. From 1572 to 1595 he held the post of lieutenant-general of the bailiwick of Caen, and in 1588 he represented that district at the Estates of Blois. But the calls of an active public life did not lead him to abandon poetry altogether. In his own words:

> Et le temps qui me reste en mon peu de loisir,
> Aux lettres je le donne, aux vers je prens plaisir,
> J'imite, je traduits, j'invente, je compose,
> Apres les anciens, ore en vers, ore en prose[3].

But for a long time he resisted all temptations to publish these fruits of his leisure. At last, in 1604, when he was verging on his seventieth year, his resistance gave way, and he began the printing of a volume which was finished in the following year. If he had ever had any faculty of self-criticism, he had utterly lost it by this time. Five books of satires, two of idylls (including much that was grossly indecent), an *art poétique* of nearly 3,500 lines, innumerable

[1] En ce temps, ô quel heur! sans haine et sans envie
Nous passions dans Poitiers l'Avril de nostre vie
Au lieu de demesler de nos Droits les debats.
Art Poétique, II. 1067—9.

[2] See his satire, *A son livre*, the last of book i, for details of his early life.

[3] First satire of book iv (*Diverses poésies*, p. 311).

sonnets, epitaphs and epigrams, all went to swell the volume. He omitted nothing except the already published *Foresteries*, and a long pastoral elegy on his friend and fellow-magistrate, Jean Rouxel. Two years later (1607) he died, leaving the reputation of a singularly high-minded and amiable gentleman[1].

The lack of judgment which he shewed in the publication of his poems has its compensating side for the student of literature, for it makes him an admirable measure of the faults and virtues of his poetic school. His most glaring fault is over-production, production without any real inspiration. No event was too dull, no topic too trivial for his Muse. Akin to this is his diffuseness, his utter lack of economy in expression. Truly might he have said with Pascal, "I have made this *poem* so long, because I had not the leisure to make it shorter." Thirdly, in the *Foresteries* and the *Idyllies*, he exaggerates the unmanly side of the Pleiad poetry, its sugared sentiment, its baby prettinesses, its preoccupation with the material side of love. Lastly he carries to excess the tendency of his school to imitation and plagiarism. Yet with these grave faults he has some measure of the two most important poetic gifts, imagination, and the faculty of poetic utterance. He was a true disciple of the Pleiad, and the Pleiad, with all its defects, was a school of true poetry. Thus in the *Idyllies*, many of which were written before 1560 when he was little over twenty, we come upon charming snatches of song, in which that mixture of simplicity and art which is the true idyllic flavour is perhaps better represented than in any other of the pastoral productions of the Pleiad. There are no better specimens than the two chosen by Professor Saintsbury. Here is one of them:

Pasteurs, voici la fonteinette,
Où tousjours se venoit mirer,
Et ses beautez, seule, admirer
La pastourelle Philinette.

[1] For the date of his death see J. Travers, *Essai*, p. lxxxiii. It is correctly given by Moréri.

Voici le mont où de la bande
Je la vis la dance mener,
Et les nymphes l'environner
Comme celle qui leur commande.

Pasteurs, voici la verte prée
Où les fleurs elle ravissoit,
Dont, après, elle embellissoit
Sa perruque blonde et sacrée.

Ici, folastre et decrochée,
Contre un chesne elle se cacha :
Mais, par avant, elle tascha
Que je la visse estre cachée.

Dans cet antre secret encore,
Mile fois elle me baisa ;
Mais, depuis, mon cœur n'apaisa
De la flamme qui le dévore.

Donc, à toutes ces belles places,
A la fontaine, au mont, au pré,
Au chesne, à l'antre tout sacré,
Pour ces dons, je rends mile graces[1].

But in place of the other[2], which is also given by Sainte-Beuve, I will quote one which is not so well known :

Toy qui peux bien me rendre heureux,
Pourquoi te rends tu si hautaine,
Philis di moy? Car si tu veux
Tu rendras heureuse ma peine.

Ie sçay que ie ne suis des beaux :
Mais aussi ie ne suis sans grace,
Aumoins si l'argent de ces eaux
Me montre au vray quelle est ma face.

Nul plus que moy n'a de troupeaux,
Ni plus de fruicts ni de laitage :
Chez moi ne manquent les chevreaux,
Ni le salé, ni le fourmage.

Ie voudroy seulement ici
Dedans ces bois tout franc d'envie,
Sans des villes avoir souci,
Vivre avec toy toute ma vie.

[1] *Idyll.* 62 (*Les diverses poésies*, ed. Travers, p. 503). With ll. 15, 16 cf. Virg. *Ecl.* III. 65, *Et se cupit ante videri.*

[2] *Idyll.* 60 (*ib.* p. 502).

Las! Philanon, qui le conduit
En t'egarant en cette sorte?
Vois-tu point ton troupeau, qui fuit
Le Loup, qui ton mouton emporte[1]?

Of Vauquelin's satires, which he seems to have written at intervals between 1574 and 1595, I shall have something more to say in the chapter on Regnier. Since M. Joseph Vianey has completed the work of stripping them of their borrowed plumes they have lost whatever claim to merit they ever enjoyed; not even the prefatory *Discours sur la satyre* is original. It is true that Vauquelin acknowledges his debt to Horace and Ariosto, but he borrows without acknowledgement long passages, even whole satires, from Alamanni and Sansovino and other Italians[2]. Nor can he be said to have adorned what he stole: his language is too incorrect, and his style is too languid for satire. He had indeed no high opinion of his own verses, which he aptly describes as *Pleins de paresse et non de doctes veilles*[3].

His *Art poétique*, which he began to write in 1575 at the command of Henry III, but which was not finished till near the close of his reign[4], is composed on the same plan as the Satires. Horace's *Ars Poetica* provides about a thousand lines, or nearly a third of the whole poem, each line of the Latin being expanded into two or more of the French. The other two epistles of Horace's second book are also drawn upon, while several passages are taken from Vida and Minturno. To these writers indeed Vauquelin acknowledges his debt, and with them he joins Aristotle as one of his sources, but it is evident that he knew his *Poetics* chiefly

[1] *Idyll.* 42 (*ib.* 490), and cf. Virg. *Ecl.* II. 19—26.

[2] See J. Vianey, *Maturin Regnier*, 1896, pp. 69—77. He points out that the well-known passage in the satire of book iii addressed to Ph. de Nolent beginning *Je ne sçauroy, comme à Dieux immortels*, is almost literally translated from Alamanni, and that the satire to Bertaut, the last of book v, is with the exception of sixteen lines translated word for word from Vinciguerra. For the debts to Ariosto, which are very large, see Lemercier, pp. 206, 7.

[3] Cf. Je suis comme un grand lac ou beaucoup vont à l'eau,
Qui tarissent ma source et troublent mon ruisseau.
A. P. I. 1165.

[4] *A. P.* III. 1145; *ib.* 1165.

through Minturno[1]. He has also borrowed from Ronsard and Du Bellay, while for his knowledge of mediæval French literature he is indebted to Claude Fauchet. The original part of his work is interesting partly for its references to the productions of the Pleiad school and its personal reminiscences, partly as representing the poetical ideas of the school. In fact Vauquelin's treatise stands in much the same relation to the Pleiad poetry as Sibilet's does to that of the Marotic school. But unlike Sibilet Vauquelin looks altogether behind him; his attitude is that of a faithful disciple tempered to some extent by his own mild and reasonable nature, and by the lessons of moderation which the second generation of the Pleiad had learnt. For him Desportes was the supreme exponent of the school[2].

In one point alone does he shew independence—and even here he is but following Du Bartas—namely in his opposition to the literary paganism of the day and the exhortation to write on Christian subjects:

> Si les Grecs, comme vous, Chrestiens eussent escrit,
> Ils eussent les hauts faits chanté de Iesus Christ.

Nor does Vauquelin atone for his want of originality by any skill in the arrangement of his treatise, which is full of confusion and repetition. Its poetic merit lies solely in the digressions, of which the aspiration for peace at the close of the prelude to the Third book may be especially commended:

> Viendra jamais le temps que le harnois sera
> Tout couvert des filets que laraigne fera?
> Que le rouil mangera les haches emoulues,
> Que les hantes seront des lances vermoulues?

1 *Pour ce ensuivant les pas du fils de Nicomache* (Aristotle),
Du harpeur de Calabre (Horace) *et tout ce que remache*
Vide, et Minturne après, j'ay cet œuvre apresté.

See Pellissier, xxxvii ff.; Spingarn, *Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, pp. 186 ff. Minturno's *De poeta* was published in 1559, and his *Arte Poetica* in 1564.

2 *Un Desportes qui fait,*
Composant nettement, cet Art quasi parfait.
A. P. III. 1173.

Que le son des clairons ne rompra nuict ne jour
Du pasteur en repos le paisible sejour[1]?

Some of the best poetic work of the second generation of the Pleiad is to be found in the choruses of the two dramatists, Garnier and Montchrestien. They keep to a somewhat narrow range of commonplace for their ideas, but their language is imaginative and stately, and Garnier, at least, is almost as great a master of rhythm as Ronsard himself. Among the numerous elegies which Ronsard's death called forth from his surviving disciples the finest undoubtedly is Garnier's[2]. It is addressed to Desportes, who, though he had ceased to write secular poetry, was generally recognised as Ronsard's successor. But the true inheritor of the poetic style which Ronsard had fashioned was Garnier himself.

Finally it must be borne in mind that though all the writers discussed in this chapter, with the exception of two or at the most three, lived beyond the limits of the sixteenth century, comparatively little of their poetry was written during the last quarter of it, and very little indeed after Ronsard's death. The unfinished *Seconde Semaine* of Du Bartas, the contributions of Passerat, Durant and Rapin to the *Satire Ménippée*, and part of Vauquelin's *Art Poétique*, practically represent the sum total of all that was produced after the latter date. From that time until the arrival of Malherbe, though Desportes was still regarded as the leading French poet, French poetry was mainly represented by the two official laureates, Du Perron and Bertaut, and after Du Perron's retirement by Bertaut alone, who, if under one aspect he is a paler reflexion of Desportes, under another and historically a more important one is a forerunner of Malherbe. Bertaut's poetry, therefore, is intermediate between that of the true Pleiad school and that of Malherbe, and as such will be treated in a later chapter dealing especially with the years of transition from the Renaissance epoch to its successor. Meanwhile, even including not only Bertaut's work but the lyrical portions of Garnier and Montchrestien, and

[1] III. 61—66.

[2] Ronsard, *Œuvres*, VIII. 243 ff.

D'Aubigné's *Les Tragiques*, the amount of poetry produced in France during the third and last period of this history is comparatively small. On the other hand the prose literature of the period is abundant and important. But before proceeding to consider it in its various developements we must first turn our attention to another product of the Pleiad, the Renaissance drama.

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CHAPTER XIX

THE RENAISSANCE DRAMA

THROUGHOUT the first half of the sixteenth century the mediæval drama still reigned, but with a rapidly declining sway. Towards the close of the reign of Francis I objections began to be raised to the mystery-plays on the ground of irreverence, and finally by a decree of the Paris Parliament dated November 17, 1548, the *Confrères de la Passion*, who had just installed themselves in the Hôtel de Bourgogne, were forbidden to represent mysteries taken from Holy Scripture. This, however, by no means put an end to the popularity of the *Confrères*, even at Paris, the only place affected by the prohibition[1]. They continued to play profane mysteries, moralities and farces, and even sometimes religious mysteries, cloaked under the name of tragedies or tragi-comedies[2]. Moreover the same decree had secured to them (saving the rights of the Bazoche and the *Enfants sans souci*) the exclusive privilege of representing public plays of any sort at Paris.

The decline of mediæval comedy in its form of the *sotie* dates from the same period as that of the mystery-play. Its last spurt of activity had been made during the reign of Louis XII, who had employed Gringore as a political pamphleteer to assist him in his struggle with Julius II. On the other hand the favour shewn by Francis I to this outspoken

[1] For representations of mysteries in the provinces after 1548, see Petit de Julleville, *Les mystères* (2 vols. 1880), I. 446.

[2] E. Rigal, *Le théâtre français*, p. 129. Lecoq's mystery of *Cain* played in Normandy in 1580 is called a tragedy (Darmesteter and Hatzfeld, *Morceaux choisis*, p. 320).

comedy was fitful and capricious. In the second year of his reign Jehan du Pontalais and two other members of the Bazoche were imprisoned. We hear indeed of a *Cry de la Bazoche* being played in 1548, but from this time the popularity of the Bazoche, as well as of the *Enfants sans souci*, rapidly and definitely declined[1].

Meanwhile the influence of the classical drama was beginning to make itself felt, partly through translations and partly through the medium of the Italian Renaissance drama. Lazare de Baïf's versions of the *Electra* of Sophocles and the *Hecuba* of Euripides, poor though they were, could not fail to excite attention. Another play of Euripides, the *Iphigenia in Aulis*, was translated by Sibilet in 1549[2], and Charles Estienne produced in 1542 a prose version of Terence's *Andria*. About this time too we find professors writing Latin plays of a classical type for their pupils. At the age of twelve, says Montaigne, who was born in 1533, "I took the chief parts in the Latin tragedies of Buchanan, Guerente, and Muret, which were played in great state in our College of Guienne[3]." In fact, Buchanan's *Jephthes*, first played about 1542, and Muret's *Julius Caesar* (1544) were the two most notable productions of this Neo-Latin drama[4].

On September 28, 1548, the Court had an opportunity of judging of the merits of the Italian Renaissance drama, when Ippolito d' Este, the Cardinal of Ferrara, produced at Lyons before Henry II and Catharine de' Medici Cardinal Bibbiena's *La Calandria*[5], founded on the *Menaechmi* of Plautus and formerly regarded as the first modern Italian comedy[6]. Five

[1] No trace has been found of a representation by the *Clercs de la Bazoche* later than 1582 (Rigal, *Le théâtre français*, p. 116).

[2] Salel translated the *Helena*, but it was never published.

[3] *Essais*, I. xxv.

[4] Buchanan also wrote *Baptistes* and Latin translations of the *Medea* and *Alcestis*. *Jephthes* is much superior as a drama to Muret's play. For an analysis of it see Faguet, *La tragédie française au xvi^e siècle*, pp. 70 ff.

[5] Brantôme, *Œuvres*, II. 256.

[6] Tiraboschi (VII. 1253) supposed it to have been represented at Urbino between 1504 and 1508, the date of Ariosto's first comedy, the *Cassaria*, being 1508. But it has been shewn that the first representation of the *Calandria* did not take place till Feb. 6, 1513 (F. Flamini, *Il Cinquecento*, p. 273).

months later appeared Du Bellay's *Deffence* in which he exhorts French poets to write comedies and tragedies instead of farces and moralities. In the same year (1549) Ronsard, with the help of his friends, performed his translation of the *Plutus* of Aristophanes at the College of Coqueret. It was in one sense, as his biographer Claude Binet says, "the first French comedy played in France." But it was only a translation, and Ronsard would never have dreamt of disputing with Jodelle the honour of having produced the first French comedy as well as the first French tragedy. In fact, in the Ode to Jean Bastier de la Peruse he pays him his just due:

> Jodelle heureusement sonna,
> D'une voix humble et d'une voix hardie,
> La comedie avec la tragedie,
> Et d'un ton double, ore bas ore haut,
> Remplit premier le François eschauffaut[1].

1. *Renaissance Tragedy.*

The production of Jodelle's first tragedy *Cléopâtre* is related by Estienne Pasquier in a well-known passage. It was first played, together with a comedy entitled *La Rencontre*, before the King at the *Hôtel de Reims* (doubtless the *hôtel* of Charles de Guise, better known as the Cardinal de Lorraine, who was Archbishop of Reims), and afterwards at the College of Boncour, "where all the windows were filled with numbers of distinguished persons, and the court was thronged to overflowing with students[2]." The principal parts were taken by Remy Belleau and Jean Bastier de la Peruse, and Pasquier was present as a spectator in the company, as he is careful to tell us, of the great Turnebus[3].

[1] *Œuvres*, VI. 45.

[2] *Toutes les fenêtres étaient tapissées d'une infinité de personnages d'honneur, et la cour si pleine d'écoliers, que les portes du collège en regorgeaient. Recherches*, VII. vi.

[3] Pasquier does not give the date of these performances, but according to Charles de la Mothe *Cléopâtre* and *Eugène* (the first French comedy) were both produced in 1552, and we know from internal evidence that as regards *Eugène* this is correct, for there is a reference to the impending siege of Metz, which began in October, 1552. It is commonly supposed that *La Rencontre* is another name for *Eugène*,

It is then as the first French tragedy that Jodelle's *Cléopâtre* demands our careful attention. The play opens with a long monologue by Antony's ghost, in which he tells us that he has appeared to Cleopatra in a dream and summoned her to join him. In the Second Scene Cleopatra relates her dream to her two attendants, Eros and Charmian, and announces her intention of killing herself. This gives rise to an animated discussion. In the Second Act, which has only one scene, Octavian expresses his regret for Antony's death, and his officers, Agrippa and Proculeius, advise him to prevent Cleopatra from committing suicide in order that she may grace his triumph. In the Third Act the two principal characters, Octavian and Cleopatra, are for the first and only time brought face to face. Cleopatra implores Octavian to spare her life and that of her children, and he grants her prayer. In the Fourth Act she explains to her attendants that the object of her entreaties was merely to preserve the life of her children, and then the three women go together to Antony's tomb. In the Fifth Act their death is related by Proculeius to the chorus of Alexandrine women.

It will be noticed that, Antony being already dead, the action of the play is confined to the death of Cleopatra, and thus only covers the same ground as the last Act of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. As M. Rigal says, "the unity of action is so perfect that there is almost no action at all." Yet in the conflict between Cleopatra and Octavian, between her determination to kill herself and his to prevent her, there is plenty of scope for dramatic action. But Jodelle has missed his opportunity. It is, as we have seen, only in the Third Act that the two protagonists meet, and except in this Act, which has some dramatic merit, the play is totally devoid of action. In the other Acts the speeches are chiefly lyrical in tone, and the minor characters

but this seems unlikely, for there is nothing in *Eugène* to warrant either the title, or the explanation of it given by Pasquier. Nor can we suppose that Pasquier was mistaken in the play. The most satisfactory solution is that *Cléopâtre* was played at the *Hôtel de Reims* towards the end of 1552 and at the College of Boncour early in 1553. See G. Lanson in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* x. 186—190.

do little more than play the part of an additional chorus to either Octavian or Cleopatra. Thus *Cléopâtre* may be more properly described as a series of dramatic lyrics than as a true drama. Moreover the part allowed to the actual chorus forms at least a quarter of the whole play.

Yet there is something in the play which at once differentiates it from a mediæval mystery. Cleopatra is no mere stage-puppet, but a woman of energy and purpose. Moreover, as Ebert points out, there is real pathos in her situation, because there is truth and passion in her utterances[1]. More than this one can hardly expect from a youth of twenty. As regards the versification it is to be noted that the First and Fourth Acts[2] are written in Alexandrines, while for the other Acts the old decasyllabic metre is used.

It is obvious that Jodelle's principal model was Seneca. He could hardly have had a worse one. The merits of Seneca's plays are philosophical power, political wisdom, and above all psychological insight. But though he can analyse character, he has not the synthetic power to create it; though he can portray passion, he cannot make men and women. Further, he exaggerates the loose structure of Euripides' plays, until his own are absolutely devoid of unity; and in his desire to be more tragic than 'the most tragic' of the Greek poets he bases his appeal to the emotions on bloodshed and other physical horrors. Thus his plays as dramas are worthless, and indeed it is fairly certain that they were written, not for the stage, but for the recitation room. The very language, with its glitter of point and antithesis, with its use and abuse of all the arts by which a skilled rhetorician bids for the applause of his audience, points to the same conclusion.

Yet it was to the pattern of Seneca that the young playwrights of the French Renaissance conformed with increasing slavishness. The long monologues, the rapid duologues of single or even half lines, the sententious maxims (which it was the fashion to print within inverted commas), the rhetorical

[1] p. 107.

[2] Ebert notes that these are the more pathetic Acts (p. 111).

artifices of language, the more or less strict adherence to the unities, the separation of the chorus from the action of the play, all these are Senecan characteristics which become more or less stereotyped in French Renaissance tragedy. But the heritage of Seneca which was the most fatal in its consequences was the substitution of rhetorical declamation and lyrical emotion for true dramatic action. In Seneca's case this was due, not only to his ignorance of dramatic construction, but to his philosophy of life. For him man is the puppet of a blind and capricious Destiny from which he can only escape by a voluntary death. Action, other than suicide, is impossible to him, for he is not a free agent; he can only

> Beweep *his* outcast state
> And trouble deaf heaven with *his* bootless cries,
> And look upon *himself* and curse *his* fate.

It is the same with the heroes and heroines of French Renaissance tragedy, with Cleopatra, and Dido, and Saul, and Porcia. But such a theory of life, whatever its philosophical value, is fatal to dramatic action.

How far the French playwrights were influenced in this cult of Seneca by the Italians is in the want of positive evidence impossible to determine. The only Italian tragedy which was translated into French was Trissino's *Sofonisba*, written in 1515 and generally regarded as the earliest regular tragedy of modern literature[1]. A French version of it, the work of Mellin de Saint-Gelais with the help of some *collaborateur*[2], was played before the Court at Blois in February, 1554[3]. But Giraldi Cintio complained that *Sofonisba* followed too much the inferior lines of Greek Tragedy, and chose as his own model the most revolting of Seneca's tragedies, *Thyestes*. His play, entitled *Orbecche*, was the first classical tragedy represented in Italy—the date is 1541—and it exercised a great influence. Of a similar type was Sperone Speroni's *Canace*, written in 1542, while in 1543 another adaptation of *Thyestes* was published by Ludovico Dolce.

[1] Rucellai's *Rosmunda* was written later in the same year.

[2] There seems to be no authority for Blanchemain's statement that this was Habert.

[3] Saint-Gelais, *Œuvres*, III. 159 ff.

Jodelle's tragedy shews no trace of the influence of either the *Orbecche* or the *Canace*[1]. On the other hand, in his treatment of the Chorus, which in the Third and Fourth Acts interrupts the dialogue with lyrical *intermezzi* (contrary to the express precept of Aristotle), he is following the example of *Sofonisba*. In the three later Acts the Chorus also takes part in the action of the drama, a practice unknown to Seneca, but followed by Sophocles and commended by Aristotle.

Before long, however, French Tragedy was to make an even closer approximation to the Senecan pattern. In 1554 Jean Bastier de la Peruse, who, as we have seen, had been one of the principal actors in Jodelle's *Cléopâtre*, died at the age of twenty-five, leaving behind him a tragedy, named *Médée*. His friends, Guillaume Bouchet and Scévole de Sainte-Marthe, put the finishing touches to it and saw it through the press in 1556[2]. It has distinct merits of style, but its chief interest lies in the fact that it is an adaptation, with some help from Euripides, of Seneca's play of the same name. In the same year another member of the Poitiers circle, Charles Toutain, published an imitation of Seneca's *Agamemnon*[3], and the same play was again imitated by Le Duchat in 1561.

We must now return to Jodelle, but unfortunately we have no evidence to enable us to fix the date either of the composition or of the performance (if it was ever performed) of his next tragedy, *Didon se sacrifiant*. Except as regards style and versification—it is written in Alexandrines throughout—it shews no real advance on *Cléopâtre*. If the lyrical element is less prominent there is more rhetoric, the speeches being of immense length; and if possible there is less action. Even the improvement in style is due in part to the fact that Jodelle closely follows Virgil, sometimes translating him word

[1] It may be noted, however, that Cintio wrote both a *Cleopatra* and a *Didone*, the subject of Jodelle's second play.

[2] Ronsard, *Œuvres*, VII. 240; Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, *Art Poétique*, II. 1039—1046. For a copy of an edition of this date (bound up with Toutain's *Agamemnon*, 1556, and Rouillet's *Philanire*, 1563), see Brunet, *Supp.* I. col. 778, where the date of *Philanire* is given as 1553, which is clearly wrong.

[3] Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, *ib.* 1047.

for word. There are two Choruses, a practice apparently adopted from the Senecan tragedies, *Agamemnon* and *Hercules Oetaeus*[1].

Jodelle died in 1573, long enough after the composition of his first play to have had time to develop his dramatic talent; but even without the difficulties which surrounded writers for the stage in those days it is doubtful whether he would have attained to any real success. A lofty and original thinker, he had not the perseverance to perfect himself in any one branch of literature. Puffed up with vanity and ambition he regarded himself as a universal genius, equally fitted for literature or practical life. It was his merit only, he firmly believed, which stood in the way of his advancement[2]. But the fiasco which befel a masquerade designed by him for the rejoicings at Paris on February 17, 1558, in celebration of the recovery of Calais, may also have contributed to his ill success. At any rate he languished for the rest of his days in comparative obscurity. He made many bids for favour and received occasional presents from Charles IX, to whom he began a long unfinished poem, entitled *Les discours de Jules Cesar*, but he never again renewed the laurels of his youth, those laurels of which he sings in the following sonnet:

J'aime le verd laurier, dont l'hyver ni la glace
N'effacent la verdeur en tout victorieuse,
Monstrant l'eternité à jamais bienheureuse
Que le temps ny la mort ne change ny efface.
J'aime du hous aussi la tousiours verte face,
Les poignans eguillons de sa fueille espineuse:
J'aime le lierre aussi, et sa branche amoureuse,
Qui le chesne ou le mur estroitement embrasse.
J'aime bien tous ces trois, qui tousiours verds ressemblent
Aux pensers immortels, qui dedans moy s'assemblent,
De toy que nuict et jour idolatre j'adore.
Mais ma playe, et poincture, et le noeu qui me serre,
Est plus verte, et poignante, et plus estroit encore
Que n'est le verd laurier, ny le hous, ny le lierre[3].

[1] Seneca's authorship of both these has been questioned, but the *Agamemnon* is generally regarded as genuine.

[2] See the poem *A sa muse*.

[3] *Amours*, xiv (*Œuvres*, II. 8); translated by Cary, p. 132. The story told

In the same year (1558) in which Jodelle met with his fiasco, a new star appeared on the dramatic horizon in the person of Jacques Grévin, a native of Clermont in the Beauvaisis[1], and a student of medicine of the Paris University. He was barely twenty when his first piece, a comedy, *La Tresorière*, was produced. It was followed in 1560 by another comedy, *Les Esbahis*, and by a tragedy, *Cesar*, which were played on the same day at the College of Beauvais[2]. The tragedy is modelled on Muret's play, and owes much more to it than Grévin acknowledges in his preface to the printed edition[3]. For as a matter of fact he has bodily appropriated nearly half of it, sometimes translating word for word, sometimes expanding or summarising[4]. But he has introduced certain changes which have the effect of making the play somewhat more dramatic than its model. Instead of confining himself, as Muret has done, to Plutarch's Life of Caesar, he has also drawn upon those of Antony and Brutus; and while Muret's play is more or less a declamation in honour of republicanism, Grévin takes for his central idea the conflict between the republican and the monarchical principle. This in itself shews some dramatic promise, which however is only partially realised in the working out of the play. The only parts that can be called really dramatic are the scene between Calpurnia, Caesar, and Decimus Brutus in the Third Act, in which Caesar, after yielding to his wife's fears, is finally persuaded by Brutus to go to the meeting of the Senate, and the last Act, in which the mob is harangued by the conspirators on one side and by Mark Antony on the other. But these scenes

by Gentillet in the *Anti-Machiavel*, Pt II. c. i, that he died of hunger is doubtless an invention of the Protestants whom he attacked smartly in his poems. See for his lyrical work, H. Fehse in *Zeitsch. für franz. Spr.* II. 183 ff.

[1] He was born in 1538. Clermont is about half-way between Beauvais and Compiègne.

[2] Ronsard's *Discours à Jaques Grévin* (*Œuvres*, VI. 311) was written about this time.

[3] *Je ne veux pourtant nier que s'il se trouve quelque traict digne d'estre loué, qu'il ne soit de Muret.* Grévin's friend Florent Chrestien adapted Buchanan's *Jephthes*.

[4] Collischonn, pp. 15 ff.

together only occupy about 150 lines, or less than a sixth of the whole play, exclusive of the choruses. The rest is chiefly taken up with long monologues and duologues which have little or no effect on the action. A peculiar and interesting feature is the treatment of the Chorus, which is composed of Caesar's soldiers. The utterances generally take the form of a lyrical dialogue, but sometimes that of a mere conversation between individual soldiers. Grévin tells us in his preface that he introduced this innovation in the interests of truth, or, as we should say now-a-days, with a view to greater realism[1]. It was in fact a step towards the suppression of the Chorus altogether. We can hardly expect to find in the work of so young a man any adequate representation of character, but Calpurnia's nervous condition after her dream is not unsuccessfully portrayed, and there is an attempt to contrast the more emotional and violent temperament of Cassius with that of the calmer and more moderate Brutus. Finally, the style, though it is marred by certain rhetorical tricks common to most Renaissance tragedies, not infrequently attains a certain dignity and energy, which reminds one that Grévin is a forerunner, however humble, of Corneille.

Unfortunately, after taking his doctor's degree, he abandoned the drama for the practice and study of medicine. On the outbreak of the second civil war (end of September 1567) he left France, being a Protestant, and after short visits to London and Antwerp accepted an invitation from Margaret of France, the Duchess of Savoy, to go to Turin as her physician. Here he resided till his death, three years later, in November 1570. Besides his plays he wrote a certain amount of non-dramatic poetry, not in any way remarkable. Some sonnets written at Rome during a visit which he made to that city from Turin are too visibly inspired by Du Bellay's *Antiquités de Rome*[2], while some others written in London shew the influence of the same writer's *Regrets*[3]. Nor do the

[1] Pinvert, p. 136.

[2] *ib.* 358 ff.

[3] *ib.* 370 ff. Neither of these groups of sonnets was published in Grévin's lifetime.

series of sonnets addressed to Nicole, daughter of Charles Estienne, under the name of Olimpe, rise above the level of the ordinary Petrarchian sonnet of the day[1]. His comedies will be considered later.

In the year after the performance of *Cesar*, viz. in 1561, a sacred tragedy, entitled *Aman*, by André de Rivaudeau, a grandson of Rabelais's friend, André Tiraqueau, was played at Poitiers. Modelled closely on classical lines, it is not a whit more dramatic than its predecessors. But it is well written, with a sustained energy and dignity of style, superior to Grévin's even at its best[2]. It is partly in Alexandrines and partly in decasyllables.

Thus when Julius Caesar Scaliger proclaimed in his posthumous *Poetice*, published at Lyons in 1561, that 'Seneca was inferior to none of the Greeks in majesty[3],' in France at any rate he was preaching to hearers who were already convinced. So, too, when he spoke of moral maxims as 'the pillars which support the whole fabric of tragedy[4],' he was in perfect accord with the general practice of the French playwrights, and with the preface to Saint-Gelais's translation of Trissino's *Sofonisba*, published the year before, which commends that play as *enrichie de sentences graves et morales*.

So with his views on the unities, which he bases, not on the supposed authority of Aristotle, but on that absurd theory of *vraisemblance* or verisimilitude which in the hands of Chapelain and D'Aubignac was to be so important a factor in the developement of French classical tragedy. The play, says Scaliger, should be so constructed as to come as near as possible to truth. Actions which would naturally occupy several days, such as battles and sieges, must not find a place in a spectacle of two hours' duration, nor will a wise playwright move his characters from one town to another in the

[1] *L'Olimpe de Jaques Grévin*, 1560. Nicole Estienne married Jean Liébault, a physician of Dijon. A good portrait of Grévin, ascribed to François Clouet, is prefixed to his *Théâtre*.

[2] A good example is Esther's speech in Act II.

[3] *Poetice*, VI. 6.

[4] *ib.* III. 97.

space of a few minutes[1]. For these reasons the argument must be as brief as possible[2].

This was exactly the practice of both Jodelle and Grévin. As we have seen the argument of their plays could hardly have been briefer, and in *Cléopâtre* Antony's ghost carefully calls attention to the fact that the action of the play falls between sunrise and sunset:

> Avant que ce soleil, qui vient ores de naître,
> Ayant tracé son jour chez sa tante se plonge,
> Cléopâtre mourra.

In both Jodelle's plays and in Grévin's *Cesar* the place is left undefined, and doubtless they were represented without any scenery. In all three plays, however, the convenient practice which prevailed in comedy might easily have been adopted, namely that of choosing for the scene some public place within easy distance from the houses of the principal characters. Thus a street in Alexandria would have sufficed for *Cléopâtre*, a street in Rome for *Cesar*, and the sea-shore for *Didon*. It is not, however, till the year 1572 that we find the unity of place distinctly prescribed by a French writer.

[1] On the other hand the Italian critic, Minturno, who closely follows Aristotle, says that a play must occupy 'a day or, at the most, two days' (*De poeta libri sex*, p. 174, Venice, 1559, and *L' arte poetica*, p. 73, Venice, 1563), while he says nothing at all about unity of place. Similarly Mutio in his *Arte poetica* (*Rime diverse. Tre libri di arte poetica*, Venice, 1551) limits the time to two days. See Ebner, *Beitrag*, pp. 167—169, where the passages referred to are quoted in full. Comp. Sidney's *Apologie* (written in 1581): "For...the stage should always represent but one place, and the uttermost time presupposed in it should be, both by Aristotle's precept and common reason, but one day."

[2] See for Scaliger's *Poetice*, G. Saintsbury, *A history of Criticism*, II. 69—80; F. Brunetière, *L'Évolution des genres*, pp. 46 ff.; J. E. Spingarn, *op. cit.* pp. 94 ff. I agree with the latter that the influence of this work in France has been exaggerated. He points out that no edition of it was ever published at Paris, and he might have added that no edition after the first was published in France. The second edition was published at Geneva in 1581, the third at Heidelberg in 1594, the fourth at Antwerp in 1607, and the fifth at Antwerp in 1617. Even during the years 1625 to 1640, when the battle of the unities was renewed in France with increased ardour, with the result that victory was ultimately assured to the partisans of the classical drama, it is doubtful whether the *Poetice*, in spite of its great reputation, was as well known in France as the little treatise of Daniel Heinsius, *De Tragoediae constitutione*, 1610.

Il faut tousjours representer l'histoire ou le jeu en un mesme jour, en un mesme temps, et en un mesme lieu[1].

This passage occurs in the *De l'art de la Tragedie* prefixed by Jean de la Taille to his play of *Saül*. He had possibly based it on a passage in Castelvetro's *Poetica d' Aristotele vulgarizzata e sposta*, published two years previously (1570)[2]. The whole of La Taille's remarks should be read as shewing the views of a thorough-going partisan of classical tragedy. He recognises that the true province of tragedy is the pathetic: *la vraye et seule intention est d'esmouvoir et de peindre merveillement les affections d'un chascun.* The hero must not be very good or very bad, neither Abraham nor Goliath. Abstract characters should be avoided, as Death, Truth, Avarice, the World. There must be five Acts, and each act must end as soon as the stage is empty[3]. The dramatist must begin his subject towards the middle or the end. No blood must be shed on the stage, for every one would see that it was only pretence (*feintise*). Finally, he sweeps aside the moralities and mysteries, and the plays which still clung to the old practices, with the same contemptuous term *épiceries*, which Du Bellay had applied to the poetry of the Marotic school[4].

[1] The words *un mesme jour*, as M. Rigal was the first to point out, do not refer to the unity of time, but are a hit at the mystery plays in general, which often lasted over several days, and at Des Masures's trilogy of *David* in particular. M. Rigal further notices that La Taille uses the vague phrase *en un mesme temps* for the unity of time without further defining it.

[2] Castelvetro takes the same view of the unities as Scaliger, basing them on the theory of verisimilitude. *Così come il luogo stretto è il palco, così il tempo stretto è quello che i veditori possono a suo agio dimorare sedendo in theatro. Poetica*, 60 v°. His book was popular in France. It may be convenient to note here that the first complete Latin translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, by Alexander Paccius, was published at Venice in 1536 and at Paris in 1538. A revision of this with a commentary, by Francesco Robortello, appeared at Florence in 1548. The first Greek edition of the *Poetics* published in France was that of G. Morel, 1555. The only unity insisted on by Aristotle is that of action. With regard to time he says that tragedy endeavours if possible to keep within one revolution of the sun, or only to go a little beyond; he says nothing at all about unity of place.

[3] *Faire de sorte que la scene estant vide de Joueurs un Acte soit fini et le sens aucunement parfait.*

[4] *Saül le furieux*, 1572, pp. 2 v°—5 r°. The principal passages are printed by

Jean de la Taille, the author of this manifesto on behalf of the classical drama, was an interesting and somewhat remarkable person. Born in 1533 of one of the oldest families in the Orléanais he was educated first at Paris and then at Orleans. In the Third war of religion (1568–1570) he fought on the Protestant side under Condé, but it is not clear that he was ever a Protestant. After the peace of 1570, disgusted with the civil war, he retired to his estates at Bondaroy, and like Montaigne combined the pursuit of literature with the management of his estate. Hitherto he had only published a didactic poem, entitled *Remonstrance pour le Roy à tous ses subjects qui ont prins les armes* (1563). It was an eloquent exhortation to peace in the manner of Ronsard's *Discours*, and had met with great success, having reached a seventh edition. In 1572 he republished it in a volume containing the tragedy of *Saül le Furieux*, written ten years earlier, and other poems. This was followed in 1573 by another volume, which comprised a second tragedy, two comedies, a satirical poem entitled *Le Courtisan retiré*, and some miscellaneous pieces. In 1595 he published another satirical piece, *Les Singeries de la Ligue*, a short imitation of the *Satire Ménippée*, and finally in 1607 a *Discours notable des Duels* in which, again like Montaigne, he protested against that pernicious fashion which in thirty years had cost France the lives of over six thousand gentlemen. He died in 1630, having reached the ripe age of ninety-seven years[1].

Jean de la Taille, if not a great poet, attained a fair measure of success in various forms of poetry. His *Remonstrance pour le Roy*, his *Courtisan retiré*, and a long didactic poem, *Le Prince necessaire*, which, though completed in 1572, was not published till quite recently, all shew a considerable faculty for eloquent and energetic expression in verse. His songs too are not without beauty, and one at any rate is worthy of quotation :

P. Robert in *La poétique de Racine*, 1890, p. 250. See also Spingarn, p. 206, who thinks La Taille borrowed his statement of the unities from Castelvetro.

[1] See G. Baguenault de Puchesse. His researches have confirmed the statement of the *Dictionnaire de la Noblesse*, cited, but not followed, by Haag, that he died at the age of 97.

C'est trop pleuré, c'est trop suyvi tristesse,
Je veux en joye ébattre ma jeunesse,
Laquelle encor comme un printemps verdoye :
Faut-il tousjours qu'à l'estude on me voye?
C'est trop pleuré.

Mais que me sert d'entendre par science
Le cours des cieux, des astres l'influence,
De mesurer le ciel, la terre et l'onde,
Et de voir mesme en un papier le monde?
C'est trop pleuré.

Que sert pour faire une ryme immortelle
De me ronger et l'ongle et la cervelle,
Pousser souvent une table innocente
Et de ternir ma face pallissante?
C'est trop pleuré.

Mais que me sert d'ensuyvre en vers la gloire
Du grand Ronsard, de scavoir mainte histoire,
Faire en un jour mille vers, mille et mille,
Et cependant mon cerveau se distille?
C'est trop pleuré.

Cependant l'âge en beauté fleurissante
Chet comme un lys, en terre languissante,
Il faut parler de chasse et non de larmes,
Parler d'oyseaux, et de chevaux et d'armes :
C'est trop pleuré.

Il faut parler d'amour et de liesse,
Ayant choisy une belle maistresse ;
J'ayme et j'honore et sa race et sa grace,
C'est mon Phœbus, ma Muse et mon Parnasse :
C'est trop pleuré.

Digne qu'un seul l'ayme et soit aymé d'elle,
Luy soit espoux, amy et serf fidèle,
Autant qu'elle est sage, belle et honneste,
Qui daigne bien de mes vers faire feste :
C'est trop pleuré.

Va-t'en, chanson, au sein d'elle te mettre,
A qui l'honneur (qui ne me doit permettre
Telle faveur) est plus cher que la vie.
Hà ! que ma main porte à ton heur d'envie !
C'est trop pleuré[1].

[1] *Œuvres*, II. p. clx ; Becq de Fouquières, p. 256.

But it is chiefly as a dramatic writer that he is important. As might be expected from the *Art de la Tragédie*, *Saül le Furieux*[1] is closely modelled on the Senecan pattern, and one could not wish for a better illustration of its defects. The subject, Saul's madness and downfall, is sufficiently dramatic, and the play is laid on dramatic lines. The Third Act, in which Samuel's ghost appears, is especially good in intention. But the whole dramatic effect of the play is spoilt by the dialogue, which hinders instead of helping the action. Thus in the Fourth Act, in which Saul declares his intention to commit suicide, there is far too much argument and discussion, while the Fifth, the scene between David and the Amalekite soldier, which has great dramatic possibilities, loses all its force from the drawn out tedium of the dialogue.

The subject of his other tragedy, *La famine ou les Gabeonites*, is that tragic story which has immortalised the name of Rizpah. The scene between Joab and Rezefe (the French form of Rizpah) in the Third Act, in which she pretends that her children are dead, is an imitation of the famous scene between Ulysses and Andromache in Seneca's *Troades*, and together with that in the Fourth Act between Rezefe and her two sons, has much beauty and pathos[2]. But in neither scene has the author really availed himself of the dramatic possibilities of the situation. In both alike he is lyrical and oratorical rather than dramatic.

The fact that both Jean de la Taille's tragedies are taken from the Bible is noteworthy, for it was contrary to the general practice of the Pleiad, who had an almost exclusive preference for classical subjects. The Old Testament, however, furnished Garnier, as we shall see, with the best of his pure tragedies, *Les Juives*, and Christian subjects are warmly advocated by Vauquelin de la Fresnaye in his *Art poétique*[3].

On the other hand Jacques de la Taille, the younger brother of Jean, who died in 1562 at the age of twenty, left behind him in manuscript, besides a comedy, five tragedies, all

[1] Played at the Jesuit college of Pont-à-Mousson in Lorraine in 1599.

[2] Portions of both scenes are given in Darmesteter and Hatzfeld.

[3] iii. 845—904.

founded on classical history or legend. Two of these, *Daire* and *Alexandre*, were published by his brother Jean. Though not badly written, with a certain dignity of style, they are neither in any way remarkable and shew no knowledge of the stage. *Daire*, it may be noticed, is written partly in Alexandrines and partly in decasyllables.

The references to Abraham and Goliath in the *Art de la Tragédie* are no random shafts. They are evidently aimed at certain plays of Jean de la Taille's contemporaries, which in opposition to the classical school of the Pleiad were written more or less in the manner of mysteries. One of these was the *Abraham sacrifiant* of Theodore Beza, written in 1550, when he was a professor at Lausanne, for the scholars of that University. His play follows with considerable closeness a mystery of the same name[1], and according to the usual practice of the mysteries Satan is one of the characters. Wearing the habit of a monk he serves to point a shaft or two at the Catholic Church, and his soliloquies furnish more or less of a comic element. There is nothing remarkable about the execution of the play except in the scene of the actual sacrifice, which is portrayed with extraordinary pathos, due mainly to that simplicity which is the consummation of art[2].

Of about the same date as *Abraham sacrifiant* and of the same character are the *Tragédie de la descomfiture du geant Goliath*, also published at Lausanne, with a dedication to the young English king, Edward VI[3], and the *David combattant* of Louis des Masures, a native of Tournai. He was secretary to the Cardinal Jean de Lorraine, then became a Protestant, and served as pastor at Metz and Strasburg[4]. His *David combattant* is the first play of a trilogy of which the other two

[1] This mystery was played at Paris in 1539 (*Cronique du roy François I*, p. 268). See J. de Rothschild, *Le mistere du viel testament* (*Soc. des. anc. textes franç.*), II. 1 ff., 1879.

[2] Beza's play became very popular. There is an English translation by A. Golding, 1577.

[3] J. de Rothschild, *op. cit.* IV. lxiv.

[4] He was born about 1515 and died in 1574. His translation of the *Æneid* was published in a complete form in 1560.

are entitled *David triomphant* and *David fugitif*. It is a pure mystery in form; there are no Acts, and the numerous scenes are separated either by a *cantique* or a *pause*, and are adapted to the *mansiones* or simultaneous system of scenery of the mediæval play. The fight between David and Goliath takes place on the stage, and, as in Beza's play, Satan is one of the characters. Each play ends with an epilogue of a moral character, and there is a considerable variety of metre, octosyllables being employed as well as decasyllables and Alexandrines.

Almost the only specimen of a tragedy of this period which, without being in the nature of a mystery, is written on non-classical lines is *La Soltane*, a grotesque and ill-written play by Gabriel Bounin, a lawyer of Châteauroux in Berry. It was played in 1560 at the latest[1], and was printed in the following year. In violation of the recognised rule of the Pleiad that modern subjects should be avoided[2], Bounin founded his play on the recent execution of his son Mustapha by the Sultan Soliman the Magnificent (1553). The conduct of the play is as irregular as the subject. Mustapha's death takes place on the stage, and the unities of time and place are entirely disregarded. On the other hand there are five acts divided by choruses, and the dialogue is written mainly in Alexandrines, though decasyllables are also employed and, for four lines only, a line of fourteen syllables. The character of Mustapha is absolutely without interest, while the chief interest in that of his stepmother, Roxolana (here called Rose), is that she suggests a comparison with Seneca's Medea. On the whole this specimen of irregular drama shews rather an inability to comprehend the Senecan pattern than an attempt to strike out new lines. At any rate it was little calculated to encourage a departure from the recognised model.

Of about the same date as *La Soltane* is another irregular tragedy, also based on a modern subject. Such being its

[1] La Croix du Maine and Du Verdier, IV. 2.

[2] *Mais prendre il ne faut pas les nouveaux arguments.* Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, *A. P.* iii. 1113.

character it is somewhat surprising that its author, Claude Rouillet, should have been the Principal of one of the Paris colleges, that of Burgundy[1], and that in its original form it should have been written in Latin, doubtless for representation by the students of the college. It was entitled *Philanira*, and was published in 1556[2]. The French translation, by Rouillet himself, appeared in 1563[3]. The subject is one of the many versions of the familiar and possibly true story, which furnished Shakespeare with the sombre plot of *Measure for Measure*. In Rouillet's play Philanire is represented as a lady of Piedmont whose husband has been sentenced to death by the Provost of the district. He promises to give him back to her on condition that she will satisfy his passion. To this she finally consents, and on the following day he sends her his corpse. She thereupon appeals to the Viceroy who compels the Provost to marry her, and then, in spite of her intercession, has him beheaded. The play is constructed with some skill, shewing at any rate more feeling for dramatic action than the ordinary classical tragedy of the period. Though the greater part is written in octosyllables, metres of seven and fewer syllables are also employed to correspond to the various metres of the Latin original.

There was another reason besides the overwhelming influence of Seneca for the undramatic character of French Renaissance tragedy, and this was the lack of stage experience on the part of the writers. There was only one place in Paris where their plays could have been performed on a real stage by actors who, though not professionals, had at any rate some experience, and that was the *Hôtel de Bourgogne*, the home of the *Confrères de la Passion*. But there were various reasons which made it impossible for the young playwrights to look to this quarter for the interpretation of their pieces.

[1] He died in 1576, being then an old man; he had been Principal of his college since 1536 (La Croix du Maine).

[2] In *C. Roilleti Belnensis varia poemata*, 1556. See Creizenach, II. 434—437.

[3] See *ante*, p. 76, n. 2; also *Bib. du théâtre français*, p. 174; *Bib. dram. de M. de Soleinne*, no. 756; *Cat. de la Bib. dram. de feu le Baron Taylor*, 1893, no. 327. I only know the edition of 1577, of which there is a copy in the *Bib. Nat.*

Even if the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne had had sufficient education to enable them to interpret classical drama, their system of scenery was quite unsuited to it. Further, the public for which they catered, the good people of Paris, accustomed as they were to the lively bustle of mystery-plays, would never have endured the tedious speeches and the want of action which marked the new classical tragedy. Moreover the antagonism between the two dramas, mediæval and classical, was so pronounced, the attitude of the classical champions to the *Confrères* so arrogant, that any combination between them was out of the question[1].

It is true that M. Lanson has been able to compile from various records an imposing list of performances, either in colleges or in noble houses, of plays written during the latter half of the sixteenth century[2]. But though the whole list is a fairly long one, and though we must bear in mind that doubtless the records are very far from being complete, the number of times that the representation of any individual play is recorded is exceedingly small. Moreover, not only were these the performances of amateurs who could have had very little experience, but they were played before audiences who were anything but critical. The professors and fellow-students who witnessed the performances in the college halls were only too ready to admire anything that was modelled on a classical pattern, while such plays as were produced in some princely *château* for the entertainment of a royal guest were often set off by elaborate scenery and music. Thus, though M. Lanson is justified by the evidence he has collected in maintaining that the writers of Renaissance tragedy during the last thirty years of the sixteenth century still wrote with a view to stage representation, they could have had little expectation of seeing their hopes realised. M. Rigal well points out that while Jean de la Taille wrote his earlier play, *Saül*, in the hope of its being performed, in his later play, *Les Gabéonites*, he makes no attempt to provide for the requirements of the

[1] See on this subject E. Rigal, *Le théâtre français*, 117 ff., and in Petit de Julleville, III. 264 ff.

[2] See G. Lanson in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* X (1903), 177 ff., 413 ff.

stage[1]. So when at last a writer appeared who was equipped with a high poetical endowment, he continued for several years to produce tragedies which were even less suited to the stage than those of his predecessors.

Robert Garnier was born at La Ferté-Bernard in Maine about the year 1545[2]. He followed the law as a profession, practised at the Paris bar, till he became judge of the criminal court (*lieutenant général criminel*) for his native province, and finally returned to Paris as a member of the Great Council. From the dramatic point of view his first tragedy, *Porcie*, which appeared in 1568, could hardly be worse. The First Act consists of one long rhetorical monologue by Megæra, one of the Furies, followed by a chorus. In the Second Act we have a monologue by Porcia, a chorus, a monologue by Porcia's nurse, a dialogue between Porcia and the nurse obviously imitated from *Octavia*, which in Garnier's day was supposed to be by Seneca, and another chorus. The Third Act, which is very long, and in which five new characters

[1] Rigal, *op. cit.* p. 128.

[2] De Thou says Garnier died in 1590, aged 56, and Sainte-Marthe gives him the same age, and from the place in which his *elogium* appears in his book evidently supposes him to have died about 1590. But Vauquelin de la Fresnaye has an epitaph on Garnier which begins as follows:

Neuf lustres sont passez que ma Muse Lyrique
Lamenta sur le Clain La Peruse tragique,
Et maintenant le plain Garnier.

(*Diverses poésies*, p. 679.)

Now La Peruse died in 1554, and Vauquelin's epitaph on him appeared in his *Foresteries* in 1555, so that according to this Garnier must have died in 1599 or 1600. Again Vauquelin in the last satire of his second book (*Div. poés.* pp. 243 ff.) addressing Garnier says:

Je suis plus vieil que toy de quelque dix ans,

Vauquelin himself being born in 1536. From these two statements we may infer that Garnier was born about 1545 and died about 1600. This date for his birth agrees much better than the earlier one with that of the publication of his first play, namely 1568.

Desportes in Bibliographie du Mans, 1844, p. 306, gives the date of his death as Aug. 15, 1590; the *Biographie universelle* gives 1545–1601. See also W. Förster's introduction to vol. IV. of Garnier's plays, pp. xxi—xxiii, where nearly all the evidence is set forth. He concludes for 1534–1590, but he had not seen Vauquelin's lines.

appear, has nothing to do with Porcia. In the Fourth she hears the news of Brutus's death, and in the Fifth her own death is related by the nurse. In his next play, *Hippolyte*[1], published in 1573, Garnier had the advantage of a more interesting subject and of a direct model in Seneca's *Phædra*, which itself is based on the *Hippolytus* of Euripides and a lost play on the same subject by the same writer. The scene between Phædra and her nurse, which forms the Second Act, is really interesting; there is genuine feeling in some of the speeches, and there is some success in portraying, if not a complete character, at any rate a mental condition. The later Acts are inferior, and quite unsuited to the stage. *Cornelie* (1574), another Roman play, is no improvement on *Porcie*, except in the matter of style. The action is confused, disconnected, and leads to nothing, not even to the death of Cornelia; for the play ends with the announcement of her intention not to put herself to death until she has buried Pompey. It is possible, however, that in a vague sort of way Garnier may have intended the fall of the Republic to be the real subject of the tragedy. As in all his plays many of the speeches are of considerable beauty, and shew real poetical merit. Perhaps the finest is Caesar's address to Rome, the opening lines of which may be quoted as a specimen:

O superbe Cité, qui vas leuant le front
Sur toutes les citez de ce grand monde rond:
Et dont l'honneur gaigné par victoires fameuses
Espouuante du ciel les voûtes lumineuses!
O sourcilleuses tours! ô coustaux decorez!
O palais orgueilleux! ô temples honorez!
O vous murs que les dieux ont maçonnez eux-mesmes,
Eux-mesmes étoffez de mille diadêmes,
Ne ressentez-vous point de plaisir en vos cueurs,
De voir vostre Cesar le vaincueur des vaincueurs,
Accroistre vostre Empire, avecques vos louanges,
Par tant de gloire acquise aux nations estranges?
O beau Tybre, et tes flots de grand'aise ronflans,
Ne doublent-ils leur crespe à tes verdureux flancs,

[1] A play entitled *Hippolyte*, probably Garnier's, was played at the College of Saint-Maixent in Poitou in 1576 (Lanson, *loc. cit.*).

Joyeux de ma venue? et d'une voix vagueuse
Ne vont-ils annoncer à la mer escumeuse
L'honneur de mes combats? ne vont ne vont tes flots
Aux Tritons mariniers faire bruire mon los,
Et au pere Ocean se vanter que le Tybre
Roulera plus fameux que l'Eufrate et le Tigre[1]?

One has only to compare this with Jean de la Taille's tragedies to realise the marked advance in style which Garnier had made.

During the four years which elapsed between the publication of *Cornelie* and that of his next play Garnier's ideas seem to have undergone some modification. He appears to have felt the need of introducing more variety and life into his plays. Hence in *Marc-Antoine* (1578)[2] the number of characters is considerably increased, and there is a double source of interest, the death of Antony and the death of Cleopatra. But the play is chiefly taken up with discussions between Cleopatra and her maidens as to whether she shall commit suicide (Act II), between Antony and his friend as to whether he shall commit suicide (Act III), and between Octavius Caesar and Agrippa as to whether Antony shall be put to death (Act IV). The nearest approach to any action is Cleopatra's final speech before her death, and it distinctly increases the effect that her death is left to our imagination, instead of being narrated by a messenger.

In *La Troade* (1579) and *Antigone* (1580), which followed closely on *Marc-Antoine*, Garnier adopted another method of increasing the interest of his plays, that of blending the plots of two or more plays. Thus *La Troade* is taken from Seneca's *Troades* and Euripides's *Troades* and *Hecuba*, the play of Seneca being based partly on Euripides's play of the same name and partly on two lost plays of Sophocles. The result is that the first four Acts of Garnier's tragedy deal with two subjects, the death of Astyanax and the death of Polyxena, which are somewhat loosely knit together, while in the Fifth Act we pass to a third subject, quite distinct from the other

[1] ll. 1303 ff. *Cornelie* was well translated by Thomas Kyd.
[2] Translated by the Countess of Pembroke.

two, namely the vengeance of Hecuba on Polymestor. The finest scene is naturally the reproduction of the famous scene between Andromache and Ulysses, which Jean de la Taille had already borrowed from Seneca.

In 1582 Garnier made an interesting and successful experiment with a romantic drama, and then in the following year returned to the field of tragedy, deserting his classical models in the choice of subject, and standing for the first time on his own feet. Like Jean de la Taille he went to the Bible and took for his subject the punishment of Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar. The play was entitled *Les Juives*[1]. There is nothing in it the least dramatic till we come to the Second Scene of the Third Act, in which Amital (Hamutal) intercedes with Nebuchadnezzar for her son Zedekiah. In the rest of the play, if there is no real action in the true sense of the word (for Nebuchadnezzar's mind is made up from the beginning), there is at any rate a strong element of pity and terror. These are alleviated by the final speech of the Prophet, who foretells the downfall of Babylon and the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. It is this appearance of the Prophet at the beginning and end of the play as prologue and epilogue which gives a unity and grandeur to the whole. He is the voice of God declaring His judgments to His chosen people. The character of Amital, too, is singularly noble, and the submission of Sedecie (Zedekiah) to the divine will in the closing scene is extremely touching. The choruses are of considerable beauty, especially the one at the end of the Third Act, inspired by Psalm 137:

Comme veut-on que maintenant
Si desolées
Nous allions la flute entonnant
Dans ces valées?
Que le luth touché de nos dois
Et la cithare
Facent resonner de leur voix
Un ciel barbare?

[1] Played circ. 1600 in the *Angoumois* by a *Confrérie* (Balzac, *Entretiens*, VI. cited by Lanson, *loc. cit.* p. 217).

Que la harpe, de qui le son
Tousjours lamente,
Assemble avec nostre chanson
Sa voix dolente?
Trop nous donnent d'affliction
Nos maux publiques,
Pour vous reciter de Sion
Les saints cantiques.

. . . . . .

Car helas qui se contiendra
De faire plainte
Lors que de toy nous souviendra
Montagne sainte!
Or tandis qu'en son corps sera
Nostre ame enclose,
Israël jamais n'oublira
Si chere chose.
Nos enfans nous soyent desormais
En oubliance
Si de toy nous perdons jamais
La souvenance.
Nostre langue tienne au gosier,
Et nostre dextre
Pour les instrumens manier
Ne soit adextre.
Que tousjours nostre nation
Serve captiue,
Si jamais j'oublie Sion
Tant que je vive.

Moreover in this play with its national import the Chorus, composed of Jewish women, is far more in place than in the ordinary Renaissance tragedy, in which it merely serves to separate the scenes and acts. Finally, the religious basis of the play gives it a breadth of interest which is often lacking in French tragedy. It is no mere accident that the three plays which the majority of critics regard as the masterpieces of Corneille, Racine and Voltaire all turn on religion.

In 1585 Garnier published a collected edition of his plays. Whatever their dramatic merits their popularity with the reading public was unbounded. From 1592, when the original privilege had expired, to 1619 there appeared over forty

editions, some at Paris, some at Lyons, the majority at Rouen.

It was at Rouen that the son of an apothecary at Falaise, Antoine Montchrestien, published in 1601 a volume of five tragedies, one of which had already appeared separately at Caen under the name of *Sophonisbe*[1]. The author was a young man of ambitious and turbulent spirit[2], who afterwards distinguished himself by writing the first modern treatise which bore the title of 'Political Economy[3].' He took part in the Huguenot insurrection of 1621, and was shot in a village inn in a scuffle between his followers and some royalist soldiers[4]. Of the five tragedies published in 1601 the most promising in subject and the best in style is *L'Écossaise*. Dealing with the tragic and comparatively recent fate of a princess who had once been Queen of France, it was well calculated to stir the emotions of Frenchmen. But even worse than Jodelle's *Cléopâtre* and Garnier's *Porcie* it sins against all the natural laws of dramatic art[5]. Throughout the first two Acts Elizabeth deliberates first with a single councillor and then with a Chorus of Members of Parliament (*Chœur des Estats*) as to whether she shall sign the warrant for the Queen of Scots' execution. In the Third Act Mary receives the sentence from Davison, the English Queen's secretary. In the Fourth, which consists of a single monologue, she prepares for death, and in the Fifth her death is narrated by a messenger. Thus the play consists of dramatic lyrics, followed by a dramatic elegy. There are practically only two characters, Elizabeth and Mary, and these never meet. There are three Choruses, the Parliamentary Chorus, that of the Queen of Scots' maidens,

[1] It was now entitled *La Cartaginoise*.

[2] He was born in 1575 or 1576.

[3] *Traité de l'œconomie politique* [Rouen, 1615]; ed. M. Funck-Brentano, 1889. The style has a certain eloquence, but is marred by an abuse of rhetorical commonplace. According to Professor Ashley it is of no value as a scientific treatise (*Hist. Rev.* VI. 779 ff.).

[4] See a letter of Malherbe, dated Oct. 14, 1621 (*Œuvres*, ed. Lalanne, III. 554 ff.).

[5] It was, however, performed at Orleans in 1603 (Rigal, *Théâtre français*, p. 133).

both of which take part in the dialogue, and the regular Chorus, which divides the Acts with familiar commonplaces on the insecurity of life, the unenviable lot of princes, and so forth. There are some very long monologues relieved by the usual antithetic duologue, and both monologue and duologue abound in moral saws:

Reine. Le souci du renom se perd és passions.
Chœur. Qui n'a la vertu mesme au moins l'ombre desire.
Reine. Qui n'a la vertu mesme à tout forfait aspire.
Chœur. D'un specieux pretexte il tasche le voiler.
Reine. Tel est si déploré qu'il ne le veut celer.
Chœur. Un courage modeste a crainte de la honte.
Reine. Un courage impudent n'en fait jamais grand conte.
Chœur. Il nous faut donc prier, c'est le dernier recours.
Reine. Les esprits furieux aux prieres sont sours[1].

M. Rigal is not unjust when he compares this to a game of battledore and shuttlecock, which, as he points out, can even be played by a single actor, as when Elizabeth says:

Qui croit trop de leger aisément se deçoit:
Aussi qui ne croit rien mainte perte en reçoit.
Qui s'esmeut à tous vents, montre trop d'inconstance:
Aussi la seureté naist de la meffiance.
Celuy qui vit ainsi, meurt cent fois sans mourir;
Il vaut mieux craindre un peu que la mort encourir[2].

In fact throughout the first two Acts Elizabeth might almost as well have been on the stage by herself. At the end of her deliberations she is hardly more advanced than at the beginning, and though at last she gives the order for her rival's execution, she immediately declares her intention of revoking it.

The one merit of *L'Écossaise* is the general excellence of its style, which is nearly always noble and dignified, and often of considerable beauty. This is especially the case with the choruses, of which perhaps the most beautiful is that on the golden age at the end of the First Act. In all Montchrestien's plays the choruses are a conspicuous feature. Those in *La Cartaginoise*, especially the first one, *Oyez nos tristes voix*[3], the

[1] Act III. [2] Act I.
[3] Printed by Prof. Saintsbury in his *French Lyrics*.

one at the end of the Fourth Act of *David*, and that at the end of the Third Act of *Les Lacenes*[1], are among the most remarkable. It may be noticed that while those of *La Cartaginoise*, his earliest play, are short lyrical pieces, those in the later plays are more of an elegiac character. To suit this change of tone there is a corresponding change in the rhythm; the Alexandrine line is freely employed, and not unfrequently used throughout. Both tone and rhythm remind us that Montchrestien is a contemporary not only of Bertaut but of Malherbe[2].

Of his plays, other than *L'Écossaise*, there is little to be said from the dramatic point of view. If they shew rather more life and movement they are equally devoid of real action. Perhaps the most promising in subject is *Aman*[3], but this advantage is thrown away by bad construction. Much the same may be said of *Hector*, the latest play in point of date, which was first published in 1604 in a new edition of the collected plays[4].

We must now go back to Garnier and consider the one experiment which he made in the field of irregular drama, the 'tragi-comedy' of *Bradamante*. According to the theory

[1] See the lines quoted by Petit de Julleville from the text of 1601.

[2] He was in fact twenty years younger than Malherbe.

[3] *Aman* was also the title of a play by Pierre Matthieu which he published together with one called *Vasthi* in 1587. They were refashioned out of a single play, *Esther*, which he had published in 1583. Matthieu also wrote some tragedies of a political character, for which see F. Holl, *Das politische und religiöse Tendenzdrama des 16. Jahrhunderts in Frankreich* (*Münch. Beiträge* 26), pp. 48—57, 1903, and E. Faguet, *La tragédie au xvi^e siècle*, pp. 309 ff.; see also the latter for other inferior writers of tragedy of this time.

[4] M. Lanson in his *Corneille* (pp. 39–44), after pointing out quite rightly that French tragedy of the 16th cent. is different not only in degree but in kind from that of the 17th cent., goes on to say that both are copies of the same original, viz. Greek tragedy, and that the earlier type, the tragedy of 'passion,' perished partly because there was no poet strong enough to give it life, and partly because being in its essense lyrical it suffered from the general decline of lyricism in France which took place at the beginning of the 17th cent. But can a type of tragedy in which, as he says, "there is no study of the play and conflict of wills," in which "everything is decided before the curtain rises and there is nothing left but to note the palpitations of the victims, the lamentations of the vanquished," be called a copy of Greek tragedy? Can it be called drama at all?

which Renaissance critics built up, partly on the practice of the ancients, and partly on a misunderstanding or at least a careless reading of certain precepts in Aristotle's *Poetics*, tragedy and comedy were two perfectly distinct species of drama. Tragedy deals with princes, ends unhappily, and is written in a lofty style. Comedy on the other hand draws its characters from the middle or lower classes, employs a familiar style, and ends happily[1].

In the case therefore of a play which did not preserve these distinctions, but combined the characteristics of comedy and tragedy, it seemed logical to call it by the hybrid name of 'tragi-comedy.' So far as I know, the earliest play to which this title was given is the famous *Celestina* or *Tragicomedia de Calista y Melibea*, written at the close of the fifteenth century. The author, Fernando de Rojas, thus justifies the name in his prologue. "Some have said," he remarks, "that this play ought to be called a tragedy, because it ends unhappily, while its first author wanted to call it a comedy because it begins pleasantly. I therefore prefer to choose a middle term and call it a tragi-comedy[2]."

[1] We first meet in France with this hard and fast division in Peletier's *L'Art Poetique* (1555). *Au lieu des personnes comiques qui sont de basse condition en la Tragedie s'introduisent Rois, Princes et grands Seigneurs. Et au lieu qu'en la Comedie les choses ont joyeuse issue, en la Tragedie la fin est tousjours luctueuse et lamentable, ou horrible à voir....La comedie parle facilement, et comme nous avons dit, populairement. La tragedie est sublime, capable de grandes matieres* (p. 72). Scaliger (1561) says of tragedy: *Reges principes, Exitus horribiles, Oratio gravis* (I. vi.); of comedy: *Exitu laetum, stilo populari* (I. v.). So Vauquelin: *Et tout ainsi qu'en l'une ne sont introduits que Roys et Princes bien nourris et bien apris, aussi en l'autre ne se voient que des personnages vulgaires et de moyenne condition, qui pour avoir débauché et suborné une fille ne font cas de l'épouser pour couvrir leur faute et eviter la punition du peché: et tousjours firent en noces ou autre contentement cette comedie. Discours sur la Satyre* in *Diverses poesies*, i. 125. Aristotle merely says, Ἡ δὲ κωμῳδία ἐστὶ μίμησις φαυλοτέρων (an imitation of persons of a lower type).

[2] Compare with this the prologue to Plautus's *Amphitryo* in which Mercurius says:

Faciam ut commixta sit haec tragicomoedia:
Nam me perpetuo facere ut sit comoedia,
Reges quo ueniant et di, non par arbitror.
Quid igitur? quoniam hic seruos quoque partes habet,
Faciam sit, proinde ut dixi, tragicomoedia.

In France the name first occurs in the title of a play published in 1554, *Tragique-comédie de l'homme justifié par Foi*, by Henri de Barran[1], but neither this play nor a *tragi-comédie* by Antoine de la Croix on the subject of the Three Children and the fiery furnace (1561)[2], both the work of Protestants, is anything more than an old-fashioned morality and mystery under a new name. The first use of the term in France to denote an irregular drama, that is to say a play that is neither a classical tragedy nor a classical comedy, belongs to the year 1564, when according to Brantôme and Castelnau a *tragi-comédie* on the subject of "*La belle Genièvre*" of Ariosto was played at Fontainebleau on Shrove Tuesday by the princesses[3]. All trace of this play, if it was ever published, has been lost, but the same source furnished Garnier with the subject for his *tragi-comédie* of nearly twenty years later.

Earlier in date than Garnier's play is a *tragi-comédie* of a very different type, the *Lucelle* of Louis le Jars, written in prose and published in 1576[4]. The subject is briefly as follows. Lucelle, who is wooed by a wealthy suitor, secretly marries her father's clerk. The father, on discovering them together, makes them both drink poison, which, in violation of the classical tradition, they do on the stage. The clerk then turns out to be the son of a Polish prince and the poison to be merely a sleeping-draught. The construction of the play

Ebert (p. 131) gives also as instances of tragi-comedies a Latin play, *Fernandus Servatus*, written by Verardi in Italy at the end of the 15th cent., some of the plays of the Portuguese dramatist, Gil Vicente (fl. 1514–1557) and the 'tragical comedy' of Appius and Virginia (said to have been acted as early as 1563).

Vauquelin says:

> *Quand il y a du meurtre et qu'on voit toutefois,*
> *Qu'à la fin sont contens les plus grands et les Rois,*
> *Quand du grave et du bas le parler on mendie,*
> *On abuse du nom de Tragecomedie.*
>
> *A. P.* iii. 165–8.

Sir P. Sidney in his *Apologie* speaks of the 'mungrell Tragy-comedie' which results from the mingling of Kings and Clowns.

[1] See E. Picot in *Bull. du prot. franç.* 1892, pp. 626 ff.

[2] *Bib. Nat.* (bound up in the same volume with *Philanire*).

[3] See J. Madeleine in *Rev. de la Renaissance*, 1903, 30 ff.

[4] I have only seen the edition published at Rouen in 1600.

is extremely crude, and the language often stilted and pedantic. The comic element is furnished by a tiresome valet who aspires to be a wit[1]. The author in his dedicatory preface defends the use of prose on the ground that it is more natural, especially in the mouths of valets and chambermaids. Moreover, he naïvely adds, writers who have no aptitude for verse find it easier.

If *Lucelle* is a *drame bourgeois* Garnier's tragi-comedy of *Bradamante*, like Corneille's *Don Sanche* and Molière's *Don Garcie de Navarre*, is a *comédie héroïque*. The subject is taken from the last three cantos of the *Orlando Furioso*. Bradamante, the daughter of Aymon and Béatrix, has two suitors, Léon the eldest son of the Greek Emperor and Roger the converted Saracen, whose love she reciprocates. Her parents want her to marry Léon, but before the Emperor Charlemagne will give his consent he insists that Léon, in accordance with a condition previously agreed upon, must first vanquish Bradamante in single combat. Léon knows that this is beyond his powers. He therefore asks Roger, whose life he had saved by helping him to escape from prison when he was under sentence of death, and of whose love for Bradamante he is ignorant, to take his place and fight under his name and arms. Roger, bound by his sense of obligation, consents. He fights with Bradamante, and without ever acting on the offensive is proclaimed the victor. Then Roger's sister Marphire declares that Bradamante had given him a promise of marriage, and that Léon must fight with him for her hand. This leads to Léon's discovery of his friend's passion and to his renunciation of Bradamante in his favour. Ambassadors from Bulgaria now arrive to offer Roger the crown of that country ; Bradamante's parents are satisfied ; and Léon is consoled with the hand of Charlemagne's daughter.

It will be seen that there is here plenty of material for a romantic drama, and on the whole Garnier has acquitted

[1] The play is said to be imitated from the *Amor costante* of Alessandro Piccolomini, bishop *in partibus* of Patras (see F. Flamini, *Il Cinquecento*, p. 559).

himself fairly well in its construction. Though there are some obscurities in the developement of the action, and though the Fifth Act—as in many good plays—is decidedly inferior to the rest, there is not only life and movement but real dramatic action[1]. It was a great advantage to Garnier to have chosen a modern subject, for it enabled him to a considerable extent to shake himself free from the baleful influence of Seneca. There are still long monologues and still a goodly crop of sententious maxims, and it is in accordance with the practice of Renaissance tragedy that Roger and Bradamante should not meet till the last Scene, and that then they should not speak to each other. But, apart from these survivals, there is great improvement. The dialogue is natural and expressive; above all it does not consist merely of rhetorical or lyrical outbursts, but it really conduces to the developement of the action. The first two Scenes of the Second Act, that between Aymon and Béatrix, and that between Aymon and his son Renaud, are really excellent. The different dispositions of Aymon and his wife are well brought out, and the dialogue is spirited with a vein of true comedy in it. Sometimes indeed there is an unintentional comic element, for Garnier does not always hit off the true tone of heroic comedy, the mean between that of tragedy and that of burlesque.

This play then with its subject taken from modern romance, its happy ending, and its somewhat familiar style, anticipates in a considerable measure the tragi-comedies of Alexandre Hardy, which took possession of the stage rather more than a quarter of a century later.

[1] Garnier contemplates the possibility of its being acted, and it was in fact acted early in the next century. See Rigal in Petit de Julleville, III. 269 n. 1.

2. *Comedy.*

The developement of French Renaissance comedy proceeded on somewhat different lines from that of French Renaissance tragedy. In the first place it never broke so entirely as tragedy did with its mediæval predecessor. This was an advantage, for the farce had at any rate this in its favour, that, unlike the mystery play, it was founded on the observation of real life. Secondly, Renaissance comedy had in Plautus and Terence far superior classical models to Seneca. This was especially the case with Terence, whose careful and unexaggerated study of life, conscientious workmanship, and unfailing urbanity of style make, as is generally the case, the man of talent and culture a better master than the man of original genius. Thirdly, French comedy was influenced to a far greater extent than tragedy by its Italian sister. In fact, before long this last influence, like that of Seneca in tragedy, entirely overshadowed the two others.

Italian comedy, like Italian tragedy, was mainly classical in its origin. Ariosto's first play, the *Cassaria*, written in 1498, and first performed in 1508, is merely an adaptation of the *Casina* of Plautus. In the *Suppositi*, produced in the following year, though the scene is laid in Ferrara, and though there are references to contemporary events and the social life of the day, the classical influence is still strong, and there are liberal borrowings from the *Eunuchus* of Terence and the *Captivi* of Plautus. It was Ariosto who mainly determined the direction of Italian comedy, and who had the chief influence on that of France. His *Suppositi* was, as we have seen, translated twice, in 1545 and in 1552, and a translation of his *Negromante* was made by Jean de la Taille about 1560[1]. His comedies are pure comedies of intrigue; that is to say, the plot is the first consideration, and such attempt as there is in them to portray character is only of secondary account. The heroines are invariably kept in the background; indeed in some plays the female character upon whom the whole plot turns never

[1] Published in 1573; *Œuvres*, IV.

appears on the stage[1]. On the other hand important parts are assigned to the servants, especially to the valet in his various forms, more or less stereotyped, under the influence of the Arlecchino, Pedrolino and other types of the popular *commedia dell' arte*.

This love of stock characters, which had been inherent in Italy ever since the days of the Oscan *fabulae Atellanae*, and of which there are ample traces in the comedy of Plautus and Terence, is a remarkable feature of Italian Renaissance comedy. Besides the various types of valet, we have the old man in love; the parasite, modelled on Gnatho in the *Eunuchus*, whose business it is to assist the lover in his intrigues; the *leno* and *lena*; the soldier of fortune, or *miles gloriosus*, at once a swaggerer and a coward; and lastly, the pedant, the only type which owes nothing to the classical drama[2].

The conduct of the play also shews certain persistent features. The scene invariably represents a public street in which are situated the houses of the principal characters, a convenient arrangement which enables the dialogue to be carried on in the street without any change of scene being necessary. The plot is largely developed by the help of *a partes*, or asides, which are overheard by some person to whom they are not addressed. As in Renaissance tragedy narration often takes the place of action, some of it being far more unrepresentable than murder or suicide. There is also a liberal use of soliloquy[3]. Briefly, the merits of this comedy are its ingenious working out of the plot, and its

[1] This is no doubt partly due to the fact that female parts in Ariosto's time were always played by men.

[2] See P. Toldo, *Rev. d'hist. litt.* v. 246 ff.; E. Rigal, *ib.* IV. 161 ff. *Les personnages conventionnels de la comédie au xvi^e siècle*; and for the characters of the *commedia dell' arte*, Arlecchino and the other types of valet, Pantalone, *Il capitano*, and *Il dottore*, see M. Sand, *Masques et Bouffons*, 2 vols. 1860, and K. Mantzius, *A History of Theatrical Art* (translated by Louise von Cossel), II. 211—268, 1903.

[3] See for Italian comedy Gaspary, II. 577 ff.; V. de Amicis, *L' imitazione classica nella commedia Italiana del xvi secolo* in *Annali della regia scuola normale superiore di Pisa*, II. 1—151, Pisa, 1873; and for the general characteristics of Ariosto's comedies Gaspary, *ib.* 419 ff.

lively and natural dialogue, while its defects are a general conventionality and the substitution of mechanical artifice for natural developement. Under the former defect may be included an indifference to morality too complete even for the Italian society of that day.

These characteristics apply not only to Ariosto, but to the mass of Italian comedies which followed his pattern. The one great production of the period, Machiavelli's *Mandragola*, seems to have been little known in France; moreover, it is only by the writer's superior genius, by his masterly dissection of character, his close observation of manners, and his crisp incisive dialogue that his comedy rises superior to those of his contemporaries. There is, however, one other Italian comedy of this period which calls for special notice, namely *Gli Ingannati*, written by an anonymous member of the Sienese Academy called *Gli Intronati*, and first performed in 1531. A translation of it by Charles Estienne appeared in 1543, entitled *Le Sacrifice*, and this was republished in 1549 and 1556 under the proper title of *Les Abusez*[1]. In a long letter addressed to the Dauphin, Estienne declares it to be the best imitation of the ancients that has yet been made in prose. It has the usual stock characters, an old man in love, a pedant, and several valets; but the dialogue is lively and natural, there are some excellent scenes, and the complicated plot is worked out with great ingenuity. It also has a special interest for Englishmen as being the source from which Shakespeare, either directly or indirectly, derived that part of *Twelfth Night* which turns on Viola's disguise in male attire and her extraordinary resemblance to her brother.

But the first comedy of the French Renaissance, Jodelle's *Eugène*, owes nothing to Italian comedy, and little to classical

[1] The 1549 edition is in the Brit. Mus.; for those of 1543 and 1556 see *Cat. La Vallière*, II. nos. 3766–7. The name *Sacrifice* is derived from a poem prefixed to the Italian edition entitled *Il sacrifizio degli Intronati* (to Minerva). (See L. Allacci, *Dramaturgia*, 1755.) It was translated in part by T. L. Peacock, 1862, whose translation with a connecting outline to supply the gaps is printed in the *Variorum* edition of Shakespeare ed. H. H. Furness, XIII. 341 ff., Philadelphia, 1901.

comedy. It is the direct descendant of the mediæval farce, borrowing from it even its octosyllabic metre. But it differs from it in one important particular; it is a complete drama instead of merely a single scene. For, as M. Gaston Paris points out, the length of *Patelin*, which admits of its being divided into three acts, is exceptional[1]. The typical farce, of which the *Farce nouvelle du pasté et de la tarte*[2] may be taken as a specimen, is, says the same authority, "a representation in verse of a scene in private life; it is short, and has few characters; it generally introduces us to the interior of a lower middle-class household, and it especially delights in depicting either the infidelity and deceit of women, or their obstinacy and disagreeable character. Another favourite class of subjects are the tricks and stratagems played by clever lovers on rich men of limited intelligence[3]." This accurate description of the mediæval farce will enable us to judge how far Jodelle is still dominated by the old traditions with which he professes in his prologue to have broken entirely.

The plot of *Eugène* is simple, and, from a reader's point of view, fairly well constructed. But there is no attempt to link the scenes together, so that it would be difficult to act on a proper stage. The language has considerable point and vigour, but it is jerky and unequal, and not sufficiently characteristic of the speakers. Jodelle apologises for its being more serious than that of a Latin comedy, and in fact the whole tone of the play is somewhat serious for a comedy, in the sense that there is nothing comic either in the dialogue or the situations. It is only in some of the characters, in Jean the chaplain and Guillaume the wittol husband, that we find germs of real comedy. And this brings us to the chief merit of the play, that it is a genuine and not wholly unsuccessful attempt to portray character. Besides Jean and Guillaume, we have Eugène, an Epicurean *abbé*, who gives the title to the play, his sister Hélène, an officer Florimond, and his servant Arnauld, a usurer Matthieu, and lastly, Alix, the wife of

[1] *La poésie du moyen âge*, 2me sér. p. 252.

[2] Printed by P. Toynbee, *Specimens of Old French*, pp. 327 ff.

[3] G. Paris, *op. cit.* p. 251.

Guillaume and the mistress of Florimond and Eugène. All of these, with the exception of Alix, who is wholly conventional, represent with fair success types of contemporary society. Moreover in the first scene, a dialogue between Eugène and Jean, we find the germ of that social satire which became the groundwork of Molière's comedy. On the other hand Jodelle makes no attempt, as Molière does, to reform the world. Regarded as a criticism of life nothing could be more immoral than his play, but it is charitable to suppose that neither author nor audience was more concerned with its moral aspect than a modern spectator is with that of Punch and Judy[1]. In this as in other respects Jodelle is no doubt merely carrying on the tradition of the mediæval farce.

Grévin's first comedy, *La Trésorière*, is in no way remarkable. It is the story of a commonplace intrigue worked out by means of narrative rather than action[2]. It is, however, unfair to speak of it as a mere *réchauffé* of *Eugène*, to which it bears no real resemblance. His second comedy, *Les Esbahis*, was played at the College of Beauvais on the same day as his tragedy of *Cesar*, namely February 16, 1560. It shows far more comic power than Jodelle's play, but in other respects it is an advance in a wrong direction. The plot is more intricate, and the author is evidently more concerned with its management, in which he is fairly successful, than with the study of character. Both subject and characters belong to the conventional *répertoire* of Italian comedy. Josse is the amorous old man, Julien the loquacious and sententious valet, and *Panthaleoné* (in spite of his name) the swaggering soldier of fortune. But whereas on the Italian stage this last character is generally a Spaniard, here he is an Italian, and serves as an occasion for pungent attacks on the country to which the play is so largely indebted[3]:

[1] It is the conduct of Hélène, the one virtuous character in the piece, which makes the play repulsive, if you regard it seriously. It is the same with Lucrezia in the *Mandragola*, but Machiavelli writes as a cold-blooded observer of contemporary life.

[2] It is printed in *Les poètes français*, IV.

[3] Though doubtless Grévin owed something to a study of *Les Abusez*, his play can hardly be called an imitation of it.

Pensez-vous le François si sot,
Qu'il n'egalle bien en parolle
Toute l'apparence frivolle
De vostre langue effeminée,
Qui, comme une espesse fumée,
Nous donnant au commencement
Un effroyable estonnement,
A la parfin s'esvanouit
Avecque le vent qui la suit?
Nostre France est trop abbruvée
De vostre feinte controuvée
Et deceptive intention[1].

On the other hand, in Belleau's comedy, *La Reconnue*, there is no trace of Italian influence. Though not published till 1578, the year after his death, it was written at a much earlier date, probably not long after *Eugène*. It is better written on the whole than either that play or Grévin's, and, as one might expect from the author's other work, it shews a considerable faculty for close observation, especially of external objects. Nor is it wanting in satirical power. But as a play it is a complete failure; it is a mere succession of scenes, strung together on a loose thread of plot. Except in length it differs little from a mediæval farce.

All these comedies are, like *Eugène*, written in octosyllabic verse, a vehicle which lends itself readily to diffuse and nerveless writing. But Jean de la Taille, in his play of *Les Corrivaux*, written about 1562[2], though not published till 1573, followed the Italian fashion of writing in prose, and with considerable success. His language is at once appropriate to the characters, easy, lively, and fairly amusing. In point of morality he is decidedly superior to his predecessors, as his play shews some feeling for the serious side of life. But in other respects it belongs to the same type as *Les Esbahis*, with even less attempt at the portrayal of character. The three old men, the two lovers, and the four valets are all purely conventional, with little or nothing to distinguish the different specimens of each class. Nor is the play at all suited to the stage, for the

[1] Act V. Sc. 4.

[2] It is praised by his brother Jacques, who died in that year; moreover the scene is laid about ten years after the entry of Henry II into Metz in 1552.

chief incidents are narrated instead of being acted. In his prologue Jean de la Taille adopts an attitude of uncompromising hostility to the old farces and moralities, and professes that his comedy is modelled on the ancient Greeks and Latins and on some modern Italians. This is so far true in that it shews more trace of Latin influence, especially of Terence, than any of its predecessors.

It was not long after the *Corrivaux* was written that Baïf proceeded to translate or adapt some of the comedies of Plautus and Terence, viz. the *Eunuchus* (1565)[1] and the *Heautontimoroumenos*[2] of Terence and the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus. His adaptation of the latter, which he entitled *Le Brave*, is a free and amplified rendering of the text, with French names of persons and places substituted for those of the original. Athens, for instance, becomes Nantes. The play thus adapted with considerable skill to the taste of a French audience was given before Charles IX at the Hôtel de Guise on January 28, 1567[3].

Four years after this performance French Renaissance comedy encountered a formidable rival for the patronage of the court in an Italian company of actors called *I Gelosi*, who paid a visit to Paris in 1571, remaining there till the following year. In 1577 Henry III, who had seen their performances in Venice on his return from Poland, persuaded them to pay a second visit, which lasted till May, 1578. Another Italian company, *I Confidenti*, came to France in 1572, and again in 1584 and 1585[4].

This trend of public favour, at any rate among the lettered classes, in the direction of Italian comedy, is also

[1] Published in 1573 in vol. III. of *Les Jeux*.

[2] Baïf's version of this is lost.

[3] Published in the same year, and reprinted in vol. III. of *Les Jeux*; see Marty-Laveaux's edition, III. 283 ff.

[4] Ch. Magnin, *Les commencemens de la comédie Italienne en France* in *Rev. des deux mondes*, XX. (1847), 1090 ff.; A. Baschet, *Les comédiens italiens à la cour de France*, 1882. Lord Buckhurst, the author of *Gorboduc*, witnessed a performance at Paris in March 1571 (*Cal. of State Papers, Elizabeth*, 1569–71, p. 413). There was one at Blois on Jan. 25, 1577 and one at Paris in October of the same year (P. de l'Estoile, *Journal*, I. 179, 192, 201).

shewn by the fact that the best known and most voluminous writer of French Renaissance comedy, Pierre de Larivey, made his reputation by merely adapting Italian plays, while the unsuitability of these adaptations for representation testifies to the withdrawal of comedy from the stage.

Born in Champagne (probably at Troyes), of Italian parents, Pierre de Larivey began his literary career by translating various Italian authors, Straparola, Firenzuola, Doni[1]. He then turned his attention to comedy, and published in 1595 six plays with a general acknowledgement to certain Italian writers, but without mentioning the particular plays to which he was indebted. As a matter of fact all the plays were translated or adapted from Italian originals, with modifications to suit the taste of French readers. Thus, as in Baïf's *Le Brave*, the characters received French names, and the scene was laid in France. Moreover a few scenes and minor characters were suppressed. It is a process with which we are quite familiar in England. The plays selected by Larivey are all of the ordinary Italian type, pure comedies of intrigue, the plot in every case being a variation of the theme referred to by Vauquelin de la Fresnaye as the staple of comedy[2]. The characters, equally conventional, are, as a rule, mere puppets, who move in a sordid world unrelieved by a glimmer of virtue or even of passion. On the other hand, the intrigue is worked out with considerable ingenuity, though, in Larivey's versions at any rate, there is little or no regard for the requirements of the stage. But the great merit is in the language, and of this a large share falls to the adapter. It is true that he is merely a translator, indebted to his models for ideas, sentiments, and even expression; but he writes in excellent French, and in a language which is at once colloquial, natural, expressive and amusing, the language of true comedy.

Of the individual plays the best known and the best is

[1] The family name of Giunti was gallicised into L'Arrivé or Larivey. Our only authority for the little that is known of Larivey's life is P. Grosley, *Œuvres inédites*, I. 19, 1812.

[2] See *ante*, p. 98.

Les Esprits, a version of the *Aridosio* of Lorenzino de' Medici, itself based on the *Aulularia* and the *Mostellaria* of Plautus and the *Adelphi* of Terence. The merits of the plot are mainly due to the Latin originals, but Larivey has shewn more independence than usual in his treatment of his immediate model[1]. Ruffin, whose profession may be gathered from his name, is an amusing scoundrel, descended from Plautus's Ballio[2], while the valet Frontin is no unworthy prototype of Mascarille. Of the other plays, seeing they are mere adaptations, there is not much to be said. There are some good scenes in *Les Jaloux*, a translation of the *Gelosi* of Vincenzo Gabiani, and there is some extravagant fun in *Le Morfondu*, a translation of *La Gelosia* of Grazzini, better known as Il Lasca. The remaining three are more reprehensible in subject, and have little merit except that of language. One of them in particular, *Les Escoliers*, which in point of style ranks next to *Les Esprits*, is so unsuited to the stage as to make it difficult to believe that Larivey had any idea of its being acted[3].

In 1611 he published three more plays, *Le Fidelle*, *Constance* and *Les Tromperies*[4]. They are much longer than the others, and greatly inferior even in point of language, which has become stilted and affected. If, as appears, they were originally written about the same time as the others, they were doubtless revised under the influence of the *tragi-comédies* which were just coming into fashion. Larivey died probably

[1] *L' Aridosio* is published in vol. I. of *Teatro italiano antico*, Florence 1888. Larivey suppresses five minor characters, and alters Ser Jacomo *prete* to M. Josse *sorcier*. A good deal of Act I. Sc. 3 is original, while such phrases as *elle eut la terre sur le bec* (=*si morì*); *je resemble aux archevesques, je ne marche point si la croix ne va devant* are of his own coinage.

[2] The *leno* of the *Pseudolus*; it is said to have been the favourite part of Roscius.

[3] *Les Escoliers* is a translation of *La Zecca*, a youthful production of Girolamo Razzi, who afterwards became a monk. Of the other two *Le Laquais* represents Dolce's *Il Ragazzo* and *La Veuve* Niccolo Buonaparte's *La Vedova*.

[4] In his dedication Larivey speaks of having found them with three others *toutes chargées de poussière, mal en ordre, et ayans quasi leurs habits entièrement rompus et deschirez*. *Le Fidelle* is about twice as long as his ordinary plays, very tedious, and badly written.

soon after this publication, for already in 1603 he is spoken of as a venerable old man. He was in priest's orders and a canon of St Étienne of Troyes[1].

The high-water mark of French Renaissance comedy is reached in *Les Contents* of Odet de Turnèbe, a son of the great Hellenist, who died in 1581 at the age of twenty-eight. It was written about 1580, though not published till 1584. The plot, of which some incidents are borrowed from Grévin's *Les Esbahis*, and others from the *Alessandro* of Alessandro Piccolomini, is mainly conventional and wholly improbable, but it is not too intricate, and it is well worked out. Not less conventional is the conduct of the play. The whole dialogue takes place in the street, and there is a liberal use of asides. But in spite of this conventional scaffold the play rises into the region of true comedy. In the first place it has a moral atmosphere, a feature wholly absent in the other comedies of the period, with the one exception perhaps of Jean de la Taille's *Corrivaux*. It is true that the lover's courtship is conducted by the method which had become stereotyped in Renaissance comedy, but it is a distinct advance in morality that the girl should hesitate, that her mother should be shocked, and that the lover should apologise. Secondly, there are at least two characters who stand upon their feet, Rodomont, the swaggering soldier of fortune, and Françoise, an elderly lady of doubtful occupation, who foreshadows Regnier's Macette and Molière's Frosine. Thirdly, the play is thoroughly national in tone, and even to some extent a serious study of manners. Lastly, the dialogue is always

[1] It is an interesting question to what extent Molière was indebted to Larivey. An instance which appears almost certain, unless Molière was acquainted with the Italian original, is the scene in *Les Femmes savantes* (Act II. Sc. 6), in which the servant, Martine, is taken to task for her bad grammar and which corresponds to a similar scene in *Le Fidelle* (II. 14) between a servant and a pedant. In *L'Avare* numerous borrowings from *Les Esprits* have been noticed, but in nearly all the cases the resemblance is very slight. In one, however (I. 3 and 4=II. 3), the debt is obvious, and in the famous scene (IV. 7) in which the miser discovers that he has been robbed, though Molière's principal model is Plautus, he may also be indebted to *Les Esprits*, III. 6. See G. Wenzel in *Archiv für neueren Spr. und Litt.* LXXXII. (1889) 63 ff.; *L'Avare*, ed. E. G. W. Braunholtz, 1897, p. xli.

lively and natural, and is written in easy and correct language. M. Rigal finds traces of the influence of the *Celestina*, a new French translation of which by Jacques de Lavardin had appeared in 1578. But it is open to doubt whether this work of true genius, with its strange blending of pedantry and passion, with its romantic conception and realistic execution, which reminds one partly of *Romeo and Juliet* and partly of the tavern-scene in the second part of *Henry IV*, highly popular though it undoubtedly was in France, could have served as a model to French writers. It was far more likely that they should go to Italian comedy for their Guillemettes and their Françoises than to the incomparable Celestina[1].

The *Néapolitaines* of François d'Amboise, an advocate of the Paris Parliament, to whom Larivey dedicated his plays, was published in the same year (1584) as *Les Contents*, though written considerably earlier. It is in every way inferior. The plot is dull and the *dénoûment* feeble. The dialogue, though well written, is wanting in vivacity and vigour, and there is too much soliloquy. Don Dieghos, the Spanish adventurer, is by no means the equal of Rodomont, and the only character that has any claim to originality is Angélique, a sentimental sinner of the modern romantic type, who might almost have figured in a play by the younger Dumas.

The superiority of the prose comedies did not altogether drive from the field the comedy written in octosyllabic verse. In 1586 François Perrin, a learned Canon of the cathedral of Autun, published a comedy, which, like one of those of his brother Canon of Troyes, was entitled *Les Escoliers*[2]. It shews no knowledge of the stage, but the language is clear and agreeable and free from coarseness, and the dialogue is confined to its proper business of working out the plot. As

[1] P. Toldo points out that the *ruffiana* of Italian comedy differs from the *lena* of classical comedy in being sometimes a sorceress and nearly always a religious hypocrite (*Rev. d'hist. litt.* v. 247).

[2] He also published sonnets (1574), quatrains (1587) and two tragedies, *Sichem ravisseur* (1589) and *Senaccherib* (1599). He died in 1606. (See the notice prefixed to the Brussels edition.)

the title implies the scene is laid in a University town, and there is some sort of attempt to portray the social life of the period. This, as well as the simplicity of the action, recall *Eugène* rather than the later comedies written under Italian influence. The author's statement that he found the play among a heap of old papers would seem to imply that it was a youthful work.

On the other hand, Jean Godard's *Les Desguisez*, published in 1594, and also written in octosyllables, shews a strong Italian influence, being founded on Ariosto's *Suppositi*, though it cannot fairly be called an imitation of it. It has some action of a boisterous and farcical kind, and for a wonder is neither immoral nor indecent, but it is without real merit. A special defect is the abuse of soliloquy in a half-rhetorical, half-lyrical form, the very defect which is so noticeable in Renaissance tragedy.

Finally, there may be mentioned a somewhat absurd, but far from amusing play entitled *Le muet insensé*, published in 1576 by Pierre le Loyer, a native of Anjou and a councillor of the *présidial* court of Angers[1]. He was a man of considerable learning, and his prologue is full of references to Greek and Latin writers of comedy. But his own play shews decided traces of mediæval influence. Some of the characters, the Scholar, the Astrologer, are unnamed, and one is entitled *Le Diable, muette personne*. The style of the octosyllabic verse is easy and good, but otherwise the play has little merit. Le Loyer also wrote a comedy entitled *La Néphélococugie* in the manner of Aristophanes[2].

Thus, except for the plays of Montchrestien, it may be said that both the tragedy and the comedy of the French Renaissance came to an end soon after the year 1580. Both had achieved one thing, a style. The verse of Garnier and the prose of Odet de Turnèbe and Larivey only require a more refined taste and a more rigid self-criticism to make them admirably suited to their respective tasks. But beyond this little had been done. There is a really tragic note in *Les Juives*,

[1] b. 1550—d. 1634.

[2] See E. Egger, *L'Hellénisme en France*, II. 12, 1869.

there is humorous study of character in *Les Contents*, and there is some attempt at dramatic action in the romantic drama of *Bradamante*, but these stand practically alone. Quite apart from the question of stage representation, in which the writers naturally failed from want of experience, both Tragedy and Comedy are lacking in that connexion with life which is the basis of all true drama. Yet Jodelle started on the right path. With all their crudeness of execution and style both his tragedy and his comedy have the root of the matter in them. Cléopâtre and Eugène alike carry out their purpose in spite of adverse agencies. They are no mere puppets, jerked here and there at the playwright's pleasure. Cléopâtre sacrifices her life, Eugène his sister's virtue, deliberately and with open eyes. They are both actors, not passive agents, in life's drama.

How was it then that with this promising beginning both Tragedy and Comedy made so poor an ending? The answer is that both were led astray by false gods—tragedy by Seneca, comedy by Ariosto. In both cases it was Grévin who took the first decided step on the wrong path, Grévin, who, ignoring his predecessor Jodelle, prided himself on being the true pioneer of the classical drama. The result was that both Tragedy and Comedy had to travel over a long and circuitous road before they reached the goal of success. First fused together as Tragi-comedy they had to learn in the hands of Alexandre Hardy the art of the stage, losing in the process all traces of style and distinction. Then once more they had to be separated and to be re-clothed in a literary dress. Above all they had to go back to the true starting point, the study of human nature and the natural developement of human action. This was the work of Corneille. Finally, when Molière had added to Corneille's study of abstract man the observation of individual men, the *École des femmes* could take its place beside the *Cid*. But all this was a work of time; it is fifty-four years from *Les Juives* to the *Cid*; it is sixty-eight from *Les Contents* to the *École des femmes*.

3. *Pastoral drama.*

It remains to say something about a new type of drama, the pastoral, which began to be cultivated towards the close of the sixteenth century. Like the first attempts of Italian pastoral drama it was in its most rudimentary form merely a dramatic eclogue, which was variously entitled an eclogue, a *pastorale*, or a *bergerie*. Among the earliest—if not the earliest—of these are Ronsard's third eclogue, written to celebrate the marriage of Claude of France with the Duke of Lorraine, and a *pastorale* by Jacques Grévin in honour of the two marriages which sealed the peace of Cateau-Cambresis. Both of these belong to the year 1559. The first Italian pastoral drama of a more developed type is generally supposed to be Beccari's *Il Sacrifizio*, represented at Ferrara in 1554. In France the same honour may be claimed by *Les Ombres* of Nicolas Filleul, a native of Rouen and a professor at the College of Harcourt at Paris[1]. It was performed at the *château* of Gaillon in Normandy on September 29, 1566, before Catharine de' Medici and Charles IX. A few days previously there had been a representation of four eclogues by the same writer. Except that *Les Ombres* is in five acts separated by choruses, it cannot be said to be much more dramatic in essence than the eclogues. But the language is poetical and the versification skilful; with the help of good music and scenery it may well have provided an agreeable entertainment for the illustrious guests who witnessed it. The subject is the usual one of love-sick men and hard-hearted maidens. But it should be noticed that while one pair of lovers is represented by a shepherd and a shepherdess, the other pair consists of a satyr and a naiad, and that the satyr is not, as he afterwards became in pastoral drama, the representative of brutish lust. Another character is Cupid, to whom is assigned a long monologue, and by whose arrows the hearts of the maidens are finally

[1] He also wrote two tragedies, *Achille* and *La Lucrèce*, the latter of which was played on the same day as *Les Ombres*.

kindled. The title of the play is derived from the amorous Shades who form the chorus.

It does not appear that this first attempt at regular pastoral drama in France was followed up for some years. The next mention of a pastoral play is that of the *Chaste bergère* of Jacques de Fonteny, printed in 1578[1]. But in that year a fresh impulse was given to the production of pastoral literature by the publication of Nicolas Colin's translation of the famous Spanish pastoral romance, the *Diana* of Jorge de Montemôr[2]. Then in 1584 Pierre de Brach produced a verse translation of Tasso's *Aminta*, which was followed in 1593 by a prose version from the pen of La Brosse, and in 1596 by another verse translation by G. Belliard. The first French writer to be affected by these impulses from without was Nicolas de Montreux, a gentleman of Maine, who, under the pseudonym of Ollenix du Mont-sacré, produced in succession three pastoral dramas entitled *Athlette* (1585), *La Diane* (1592), and *L'Arimène* (1597). He also wrote in imitation of the *Diana* the first French pastoral novel, *Les bergeries de Juliette* (1588)[3]. All his three plays shew marked traces of the influence of the Spanish romance; in all, especially the two later, there is a somewhat complicated plot, and in all there is a considerable element of magic inspired by the character of 'the wise Felicia.' On the other hand, the description of *Athlette* as a *fable bocagère* is a reminiscence of *Aminta*, *favola boscareccia*. By far the most elaborate of the three plays is *L'Arimène*, which was played before the Duc de Mercœur in 1596 at the famous *château de Nantes*. It has twelve characters, including a valet and a pedant who furnish an element of farce, and the acts are divided by *intermezzos* on different mythological subjects, the storming of heaven by the giants, the abduction of Helen, the deliverance of Andromeda by Perseus, and the descent of Orpheus to Hell, all of which must have required machinery of an elaborate character.

[1] I have not seen a copy of this play.

[2] See *ante*, p. 52, n. 2.

[3] It was translated into English by Robert Tofte (1610).

Nothing but a bare mention is needed for *La Dieromène*, a prose pastoral imitated from *Il pentimento amoroso* of Luigi Groto by Roland Brisset of Tours (1596), who also translated Guarini's *Il Pastor fido* (1593)[1], and for 'a pastoral tragi-comedy' in verse, relating to the loves of Mylas and Clorys, by Claude de Bassecourt, a gentleman of Hainault (1594). The latter is modelled on the *Aminta*, and partly also on the *Pastor fido*. By the close of the sixteenth century French pastoral drama, which during the next decade had a considerable vogue, had become thoroughly stereotyped both in plot and characters, and had lost all delicacy of sentiment and distinction of style[2]. Hardy purged it of some of its more absurd conventionalities, but from 1611 to 1626 its popularity was on the wane. Then Jean Mairet with his *Sylvie* (1626), which is pastoral only in part, and his *Silvanire* (1629), an adaptation of a play of the same name by D'Urfé, brought it again into favour for a brief spell[3]. But in 1634 the same writer's *Sophonisbe* turned the current of fashion towards tragedy, and pastoral drama disappeared from the French stage.

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[1] Brisset also wrote five tragedies of which four were imitations of Seneca and one of Buchanan's *Jephthes*.

[2] See Rigal in Petit de Julleville, IV. 218—220.

[3] See *Silvanire*, ed. R. Otto, pp. liv, lv.

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PART III

1580–1605

MONTAIGNE

CHAPTER XX

THE RETURN TO NATURE

THE peace of Fleix, which was ratified at the close of the year 1580, gave France rest from war, except for a few sporadic disturbances, for more than four years. But the manifesto issued by the recently constituted League on the last day of March, 1585, had the effect of plunging the country into a fresh war, which lasted for more than thirteen years. In this new war there was at first (until the death of Henry III) an additional element of disorder in the fact that it was a three-cornered contest, Leaguers, Royalists, and Huguenots being all opposed to one another. Moreover the extreme weakness of the Crown, and the personal unpopularity of Henry III, arising chiefly from the power which he accumulated in the hands of his favourites, but partly also from the contempt into which he had brought the royal dignity by his mummings and masqueradings, contributed largely to the disorder. Finally the fact that Paris was the headquarters of the League, and that from the day of the Barricades (May 12, 1588) to the entry of Henry IV (March 22, 1594) the capital of the kingdom was subject to a tyranny as stringent, though not as bloody, as that of the Reign of Terror, helped to paralyse the vital powers of the whole kingdom.

As we have seen, this condition of things, working with other more natural causes, was fatal to the production of poetry and drama, of which, in the words of Dryden, "the Muses ever follow peace." But on the other hand it was not fatal to the production of prose; indeed it may be said even to have stimulated it. For men weary of the long struggle turned to literature not as a source of livelihood, but as an

anodyne for the unhappy condition of their country, or as a means of beguiling long hours of inactivity to which they were condemned by wounds or imprisonment. So it came to pass that French prose, which during the first period of our survey had to fight its way in the face of great difficulties (partly from the transitional condition of the language, partly from the rivalry of Latin), and which during the second period (except for the last two books of *Pantagruel*) produced only one work of first-rate importance, namely, Amyot's *Plutarch*, now in this period of general unrest and disorder put forth vigorous and varied blossoms. Montaigne in his solitary *château*, La Noue in his prison at Limbourg, Monluc and Brantôme under the physical inactivity to which their restless bodies had been condemned, Pasquier upholding the royalist cause at Tours, the writers of the *Satire Ménippée* under the gloomy shadow of the League at Paris, all these men were in their different way shaping and moulding the great French language.

It is to be noted too that, unlike the majority of the poets of the former period, all these prose writers, except Brantôme, shew a seriousness of purpose and a sustained sense of the grave issues of life. It appears alike in the Catholic Monluc and the Protestant La Noue, beneath the mask of Montaigne's artistic scepticism and behind the comedy of the *Satire Ménippée*. It was indeed a time which called for seriousness if France was to be saved from anarchy or subjection to a foreign power, and her ultimate salvation was in fact in no little measure due, as D'Aubigné says, to the *plumes bien taillées* of the patriotic party, to the manly, sensible, and hopeful tone of their writings.

Moreover this literature was not only patriotic in feeling, but it was far more national in character and style than the poetry of the Pleiad. The reaction against Italian influence which had begun in politics now extended to literature. The mere fact that poetry was overshadowed by prose accorded no less with the genius of the nation than the return that was made in poetry itself to the lighter and more familiar style of the Marotic Muse. The increased interest in the study of

human nature, awakened by Amyot's translation of Plutarch, and stimulated by Montaigne's *Essays*, turned literature into a channel peculiarly suited to the French spirit of delicate analysis. Though the form of the literature was still that of the sixteenth century, in substance it was already beginning to foreshadow the great masterpieces of the age of Louis XIV.

Before dealing with the more important and more typical prose writers of this period, there are two writers who demand our attention, Ambroise Paré, the surgeon, and Bernard Palissy, the potter. They are generally classed together in histories of literature as scientific writers, but it will emphasize better their special position in the literature of the French Renaissance, if they are described negatively as not being humanists.

During the whole of our preceding survey we have been concerned almost exclusively with men who were either classical scholars of some distinction, or at any rate had been nurtured on classical literature. Even if, as in Marot's case, their classical learning was slender, they had at least some familiarity with the best available substitute, the literature of Italy. On the other hand the study of nature at first hand, the appeal from tradition to experience, had begun to manifest itself only in a few isolated cases. It is as the embodiment of the scientific spirit even more than by his multifarious learning and attainments that Leonardo da Vinci stands forth as, on the whole, the most remarkable, though not the most typical, figure of the Renaissance. Some measure of this spirit had descended too upon Rabelais, but it was mingled in his case with a veneration for antiquity which was hardly less superstitious than that of his contemporaries. But as a rule the adherence to classical authority was unqualified and unquestioned, and it was hardly less so in science than in literature. The Renaissance pioneers in science contented themselves with translating Greek writers, and made the interpretation of Greek texts the groundwork of their teaching.

The importance therefore of Paré and Palissy lies in the fact that here at last we have two men who were ignorant

alike of Greek and Latin and Italian, two men who made experience and not tradition the starting-point of their knowledge. "Test it by experiment" was Paré's method of solving every controversial point in practice. It is Theory who is invariably worsted in the argument with Practice in Palissy's *Discours admirables*. Thus a chapter dealing with these men, who made common-sense and experience the basis of their respective studies in surgery and natural philosophy, is a fitting ante-chamber to one on the great writer who applied the same tests to the study of man in general.

In fact Ambroise Paré[1], with his shrewd common-sense and eager curiosity, reminds one of Montaigne, though he directed experiment and experience to a different end, the practice of his profession. Born, probably in 1516, in a village which now forms part of the episcopal town of Laval in Maine, he came to Paris in 1532 or 1533, to serve his apprenticeship to a barber-surgeon[2]. In 1534 he obtained an appointment as a sort of house-surgeon in the *Hôtel-Dieu*, and in 1537 he accompanied the French army to Turin as surgeon to M. de Montejan, who was in command of the infantry. It was on this occasion that he made his first important discovery. Through the accident of his supply of boiling oil running short he learnt that the cauterisation of gunshot wounds, universally practised at this time, was a mistake. *Voilà comme j'appris à traiter les playes faites par harquebuses, non par les livres.*

For the next thirty years there was hardly an important French war in which he did not take part. He was at Boulogne when François de Guise received his terrible wound

[1] b. 1516 (?)—d. 1590.

[2] The best available evidence for the date of his birth, namely the statement of his age beneath the portraits prefixed to his various works, varies considerably. Up till 1564 he adhered to the date of 1516, but from 1573 he began to be uncertain, and under his portrait by Delanne, engraved in 1582, he is described as 72. (See Le Paulmier, pp. 135 f.) The statement of Pierre de l'Estoile that he was 80 at the time of his death in Dec. 1590 is not likely to have come from any better authority than Paré himself. In favour of the later date are (1) his arrival at Paris in 1532 or 1533, and the special emphasis laid on his youth when he was at Turin in 1538; (2) the known fact that old men are apt to overstate their age.

in the face from a lance[1]; he attended the King of Navarre after his mortal wound before Rouen, and the Constable de Montmorency after the battle of Saint-Denis; he was in Metz during its famous siege by Charles V, having been smuggled into the town by order of Henry II; and in the following year (1553) he became a prisoner by the surrender of Hesdin, but before long was released without ransom by a grateful patient. Meanwhile his fame had been steadily increasing. In 1552 he was appointed one of the king's surgeons in ordinary, and in that capacity stood in consultation round the death-bed of Henry II after his fatal wound[2]. Seventeen months later he was summoned to attend his successor Francis II, who died on Dec. 5, 1560. On the first day of the year 1562 he was appointed chief surgeon to Charles IX, a post which he retained under his successor. It was he who amputated Coligny's two fingers after he had been wounded by Maurevel, and he was watching by his bed on the fatal morning of St Bartholomew.

In 1575 he published the first collected edition of his works, which included, besides a general account of anatomy and surgery, the famous *Methode de traicter les playes faictes par hacquebutes et aultres bastons a feu*[3], a little treatise of 68 leaves first published in 1545 and notable as the first scientific work ever written in French, another on wounds in the head (1561), and a third on the plague (1568). The publication of this edition involved him in a long warfare with the faculty of Physicians. The last edition of his works that was published in his lifetime (1585) concluded with the *Apologie et traité contenant les voyages faits en divers lieux*, written in 1584. This treatise, which is Paré's chief claim to recognition as a man of letters, is an account of his experiences

[1] *Œuvres*, II. 25. Malgaigne points out that Paré nowhere tells us who the surgeon was who extracted the broken lance, and that the well-known story of his doing it himself first appears in the untrustworthy *Vie de Coligny* by Sandras de Courtils, 1686.

[2] *Œuvres*, II. 25.

[3] Paré afterwards adopted the spelling *harquebuse*, which should really be *arquebuse* from the Italian *archibuso*. *Hacquebute* is from the German *haken-büchse*.

as an army-surgeon, and thus introduces the personal element, necessarily absent from his purely scientific writings, which wins the interest of the reader and makes for literature. We learn from it that he possessed all the qualities which go to make a great surgeon in all ages, common-sense, deftness of hand, care for small details, tenderness, and sympathy. The literary merit of his writing is chiefly owing to two qualities, clearness of thought which is reflected in clearness of expression, and a strong visualising faculty which enables him to give life and picturesqueness to his narrative. Occasionally he indulges in a vein of rather grim irony as in the close of his account of the siege of Metz:

Ie veux encore retourner à la cause de leur mortalité, qui estoit principalement de la faim, peste, et du froid: car la neige estoit sur la terre plus de hauteur de deux pieds, et estoient logés en des cauernes sous terre, couuertes d'vn peu de chaume seulement. Neantmoins que chacun soldat auoit son lit de camp et une couuerture toute semée d'estoiles luisantes et brillantes, plus claires que fin or: et tous les iours auoient draps blancs, et logés à l'enseigne de la Lune, et faisoient bonne chere, quand ils auoient de quoy: et payoient si bien leur hoste dès le soir, que le matin s'en alloient quittes, secoüant les oreilles. Et ne leur falloit nul peigne pour destacher le duuet et la plume de contre leurs barbes et cheueux: et trouuoient tousiours happe blanche, perdans de bons repas par faute de viandes. Aussi la plus grande part n'auoit bottes, ny bottines, pantoufles, chausses, ny souliers: et plusieurs aimoient mieux n'en avoir point que d'en auoir, pource qu'ils estoient tousiours en la fange iusques à my-iambes: et à cause qu'ils alloient nuds pieds, nous les appellions les *Apostres de l'Empereur*[1].

This story of Metz is the best-known of his *Voyages*, but the account of the siege of Hesdin is of equal interest, while there is a special charm in the *Voyage de Flandres*, in which he tells us how he cured the young Marquis d'Auret, a brother of the Duc d'Arschot, of a wound in his leg from which he had been suffering for seven months.

Je le pansais, Dieu le guérit. That is the usual phrase in which he speaks of his cures. For nothing is more characteristic of the man than his deep piety. It appears strongly in the chapter of his work entitled *Des causes divines de la peste*

[1] *Œuvres*, III. 708.

(book XXIV. c. ii) and in the concluding chapter of the same book. These together with the penultimate chapter, which draws a moving picture of the misery caused by the plague, and with the curious account of the tricks of beggars[1] in the book on monsters, may be added to the *Apologie et voyages* as being of interest to the general reader. Paré ended his long and active life on December 20, 1590, when Paris was in the hands of the League, hated by the Leaguers, but beloved by all good citizens as a fearless advocate of peace and toleration[2].

In the same year as Paré there died also at Paris, but in the prison of the Bastille, Bernard Palissy, the potter[3]. The services of this great man to art and science are so remarkable, his personal character stands so high, that in a country like France, which knows how to honour art and science, it is no wonder that his name should be honoured almost beyond that of any other writer of the sixteenth century. This

[1] Book XIX. cc. xxi–xxiv; part of this is evidently taken from Noel du Fail's *Propos rustiques* c. vii.

[2] P. de l'Estoile, *Journal*, v. 65. It is by no means certain whether he was a Huguenot or a Catholic. The common tradition that he was a Huguenot and that he was saved from the massacre of St Bartholomew by the special intervention of Charles IX, rests on somewhat slender evidence, the untrustworthy *Vie de Coligny*, an unlikely story told by Sully who was only a boy at the time of the massacre, and two passages of Brantôme. Against Brantôme's testimony, which alone counts, has been set the fact that Paré was married, his children baptized, and he and his wife buried in a Catholic Church. But Henri Bordier, whose opinion is of great weight, says that this proves nothing, for the Protestants at this time had no official places of their own where such ceremonies could be celebrated. Further Paré in a passage which appears in the 1575 edition of his works, but which was subsequently omitted, speaks of *Quelques uns qui me hayoyent à mort pour la Religion* (*Œuvres*, III. 662), a remark which certainly implies that he had, at any rate, once been a Protestant. Malgaigne (*Œuvres*, I. cclxxvii ff. and v. xiv) believes that at least after St Bartholomew he was a professed Catholic. S. Paget, *Paré and his times*, A. Jal, *Dict. critique*, and J. Trévédy, *A. Paré, Est-il mort Catholique?* (Laval and Rennes, 1890), all take a similar view. The view that he was a Protestant is upheld by H. Bordier in *Bull. prot. franç.* for 1868, pp. 173 ff. and Dr Le Paulmier, *A. Paré*, p. 79. It requires more knowledge than I possess of the social conditions of Paré's times to come to any positive conclusion, but the evidence on the whole seems to be in favour of the view that he was a Protestant.

[3] b. 1515 to 1520—d. 1590. I see no reason to doubt the positive statement of P. de l'Estoile (*Journal*, v. 67) who knew Palissy and was in Paris in 1590. D'Aubigné puts his death a year earlier.

admiration for the man has, however, led to a somewhat exaggerated estimate of his literary merits.

We have little positive information about his early life, but such evidence as is forthcoming seems to shew that he was born in the Agenais between 1515 and 1520[1]; and that before the year 1540 he went to live at Saintes[2] and there carried on his two professions of land-surveyor and painter on glass[3]. It is with Saintes that Palissy's name is most intimately connected, so that Olivier de Serres not unnaturally speaks of him as *le paysan de Xaintonge*; it was at Saintes that his heroic struggles in the endeavour to make white enamel took place; and it was at Saintes that he became a Protestant and bore his part in the tribulations of the infant church. But he did not live there continuously. Not to speak of shorter absences, for the most part connected with his business of land-surveying, he spent, he tells us, some years at Tarbes in the kingdom of Navarre, and in 1563 we find him at La Rochelle, where his first work was printed. Its title is worth giving in full. *Recepte véritable, par laquelle tous les hommes de la France pourront apprendre à multiplier et augmenter leurs thresors. Item, ceux qui n'ont jamais eu cognoissance des lettres pourront apprendre une philosophie nécessaire à tous les habitans de la terre. Item en ce livre est contenu le dessein d'un Jardin, autant delectable et d'utile invention qu'il en fut oncques veu.*

[1] P. de l'Estoile says he was 80 at the time of his death, D'Aubigné who puts his death in 1589 that he was 90. On the other hand Lacroix du Maine, writing in 1584, says that he was at that time 'sixty and more.' L'Estoile's date has been generally adopted on the ground that it is an intermediate one. But surely on the point of age L'Estoile is not so good an authority as a professed biographer and bibliographer like Lacroix du Maine. The latter writer also says that Palissy was a native of the diocese of Agen, and Palissy himself speaks of Saintonge, which some writers regard as his native province, merely as *pays de son habitation*.

[2] In the dedication of the *Discours admirables* to Antoine de Pons, Palissy says, *Combien que j'eusse bon tesmoignage de l'excellence de votre esprit, dès le temps que retournastes de Ferrare, en vostre chateau de Ponts*. The *château* was close to Saintes and its lord returned from Ferrara in 1539. Palissy's language, says Audiat (p. 10), shews that he must have migrated to Saintonge in early youth, but see Dupuy, p. 234.

[3] M. Dupuy thinks that his work as a *peintre-verrier* or *vitrier* was confined to the sale and repair of stained glass (pp. 65–71). It is evident that he was occupied in some rather humble branch of the art.

Item, le dessein et ordonnance d'une Ville de forteresse, la plus imprenable qu'homme ouyt jamais parler, Composé par Maistre Bernard Palissy, ouvrier de terre, et inventeur des rustiques figulines du Roy et de Monseigneur le duc de Montmorency, pair et connestable de France, demeurant en la ville de Xaintes.

Even this comprehensive title by no means fully indicates the various entertainment that awaits us. As M. Dupuy says, the book "contains at once a fragment of agricultural chemistry, a dissertation on stones and their formation, a theory of the origin of metals, the description of a delightful garden, a moral satire on the follies of mankind, a history of the Reformation in Saintonge, and an account of the persecution of the Reformers." But from the literary point of view perhaps the main interest lies in the fact that here we have in the full flood-time of the Renaissance a work by a man who not only, like Paré, knew no Greek or Latin, but who had little book-learning of any kind. In the first place it should be noticed that the treatise is in the form of a dialogue, a form which the writings of Viret had made familiar to Protestants. Insipid as it generally is, especially when no attempt is made to give dramatic life to the speakers, it is not ill-suited to the work of popular exposition. Palissy at any rate did well to adopt it, because conversation was more familiar to him than books. Here, as in other treatises written in this form during this period, the parts are most unequally distributed; one speaker expounds while the other merely asks questions. Palissy's questioner is represented as singularly dull of understanding. "I never saw a man so dense (*de si dure cervelle*) as you," says his opponent; and "I never met anybody so stupid"; and, "If you don't believe this, you must have an ass's head on your shoulders."

The style of the writing is singularly straightforward and clear, without any attempt at literary ornament. It is the natural expression of a logical mind. For all his want of education Palissy has the root of good writing in him; he reminds one of Renan's remark suggested by the style of a modern hero of science, Claude Bernard, *Elle repose sur la logique, base unique, base éternelle du bon style.* A remark-

able feature is the absence of those long sentences which we find in nearly all sixteenth-century prose, influenced as it was by the study of Latin models.

The best-known portion of the treatise is the account of the beginnings of the Reformed Church at Saintes, but it is less striking than the part which almost immediately precedes it, where Palissy, under the weird allegory of an examination of various skulls, satirises the vices of the day, as exhibited in certain professions. For instance he represents himself as thus addressing the skull of a Canon:

Pourquoi est-ce que tu es si grand ennemi de ceux qui parlent des authoritez de l'Escriture saincte? Mais iceluy respondant, dist que, ne seroit qu'on le vouloit contraindre d'aller prescher en ses bénéfices, qu'il tiendroit la partie des protestants: mais à cause qu'il n'avoit aprins à prescher, et qu'il avoit accoustumé avoir ses aises dès sa jeunesse, cela lui coustoit de soustenir l'Eglise Romaine. Et je dis lors: "Tu es bien meschant et tu fais de l'hypocrite devant tes frères les autres Chanoines, qui pensent que tu soustiennes et que tu croyes directement les statuts de l'Eglise Romaine. Non, non, dit-il, il n'y en a pas un de mes compagnons qui ne confesse la vérité, ne seroit la crainte de perdre leur revenu. Et, qu'ainsi ne soit, il n'y a celui qui ne mange de la chair en caresme aussi bien comme moy, et, quelque mine qu'ils facent, ils ne vont à la messe sinon pour conserver la cuisine, et de ce n'en faut douter. Et quand n'eut esté que les bonnes gens nous vouloient contraindre d'aller prescher, nous eussions aisément souffert les ministres; mais nostre revenu est cause que nous faisons nos esforts pour les banir[1]."

The following will give an idea of Palissy's ordinary style when he is explaining some natural phenomenon. Nothing can be simpler or clearer.

Quand tu iras par les villages, considere un peu les fumiers des laboureurs, et tu verras qu'ils les mettent hors de leurs estables, tantost en lieu haut, et tantost en lieu bas, sans aucune considération; mais qu'il soit appilé, il leur suffit. Et puis, pren garde au temps des pluyes, et tu verras que les eaux qui tombent sur lesdits fumiers, emportent une teinture noire, en passant par ledit fumier, et, trouvant le bas, pente, ou inclinaison du lieu où les fumiers seront mis, les eaux qui passeront par lesdits fumiers, emporteront ladite teinture, qui est la principale et le total de la substance du fumier. Parquoy, le fumier, ainsi lavé, ne peut servir, sinon de parade, mais estant porté au champ, il n'y fait aucun profit. Voila pas donques une ignorance manifeste, qui est grandement à regretter[2]?

[1] Ed. Fillon, I. 111. [2] Ed. Fillon, I. 27.

The title of *inventeur des rustiques figulines* to the King and the Constable de Montmorency by which Palissy describes himself on the title-page of the *Recepte véritable* shews that when the book was published he had already begun the production of his famous rustic ware. In fact Montmorency was now employing him on the work of making grottoes for his *château* at Ecouen, and he had probably hit upon the device of attaching him also to the King's service in order to rescue him from prison at Bordeaux, where he had been sent as a heretic after the troubles of 1562[1]. Some time between 1564 and 1567 he took up his abode at Paris[2], and Catharine de' Medici, who probably made his acquaintance at Saintes in 1565[3], succeeded the Constable as his patron, and before long employed him on her new palace of the Tuileries[4]. In 1575 he gave a course of three lectures at Paris which were continued at least in the following year and possibly for some years afterwards. He has preserved the names, so far as he knew them, thirty-three in number, of those who attended the lectures. The list includes thirteen physicians, the sculptor Berthélemy Prieur, and most interesting of all, Ambroise Paré. In 1580 the lectures were published under the title of *Discours admirables*.

According to Lacroix du Maine, Palissy was still lecturing at Paris in 1584, but except for this statement we hear nothing more of him till his imprisonment in the Bastille in the spring of 1588[5], where he remained till his death in 1590.

[1] Audiat in Fillon's ed. I. xlvii; Dupuy, p. 41.

[2] B. de Fillon, *Lettres écrites de la Vendée à M. Anatole de Montaiglon*, 1861, p. 54; Dupuy, p. 43.

[3] B. Fillon, *op. cit.* p. 55; Audiat, p. 242.

[4] The foundation-stone was laid on Jan. 11, 1566; Palissy's name first appears in the accounts in a document of Jan. 1570 (Dupuy, p. 44). Dupuy conjectures that he was in the Ardennes, in the territories of the Duc de Bouillon, where he evidently spent some time, on the fatal day of St Bartholomew (p. 58), Audiat that he took refuge with the Duke, who was a Protestant, after the massacre.

[5] This appears from a new passage in the Journal of P. de L'Estoile pub. by H. Omont in 1900. If D'Aubigne's story of his conversation in prison with Henry III is true, he must have been imprisoned before May 13, 1588, when Henry III left Paris never to return (*Hist. Univ.* ed. A. de Ruble, VIII. 151; *Les Tragiques*, *Œuvres*, IV. 187; *Confession de Saucy*, *ib.* II. 351). Audiat (pp. 445—461) doubts the truth of the story on the ground of the date, but it agrees with that given by L'Estoile.

Though the *Discours* are of more importance than the *Recepte véritable* for determining the extent of Palissy's scientific knowledge, they are, with one exception, of less interest to the general reader. That exception is the famous *De l'art de terre*, in which Palissy relates the story of his heroic, but unsuccessful, efforts to penetrate the secrets of white enamel[1]. It is especially this narrative which has earned for Palissy his high reputation as a writer. Here is the concluding passage, the most often quoted, and on the whole the best:

J'ay esté plusieurs années que n'ayant rien dequoy faire couvrir mes fourneaux, j'estois toutes les nuits à la mercy des pluyes et vents, sans avoir aucun secours aide ny consolation, sinon des chatshuants qui chantoyent d'un costé et les chiens qui hurloyent de l'autre; parfois il se levoit des vents et tempestes qui souffloyent de telle sorte le dessus et le dessouz de mes fourneaux, que j'estois contraint quitter là tout, avec perte de mon labeur; et me suis trouvé plusieurs fois qu'ayant tout quitté, n'ayant rien de sec sur moy, à cause des pluyes qui estoyent tombées, je m'en allois coucher à la minuit ou au point du jour, accoustré de telle sorte comme un homme que l'on auroit trainé par tous les bourbiers de la ville; et en m'en allant ainsi retirer, j'allois bricollant sans chandelle, et tombant d'un costé et d'autre, comme un homme qui seroit yvre de vin, rempli de grandes tristesses: d'autant qu'apres avoir longuement travaillé je voyois mon labeur perdu. Or en me retirant ainsi soüillé et trempé, je trouvois en ma chambre une seconde persecution pire que la premiere, qui me fait à present esmerveiller que je ne suis consumé de tristesse.

It would be idle to deny the force and pathos of this; and yet the touch of exaggeration, even of rhetoric, makes it, as it makes the whole narrative, ring less agreeably to the ear than the clear and simple language in which Palissy relates

[1] Ed. Fillon, II. 201—220. Palissy begins his account by saying that he was shewn *twenty-five* years ago a beautiful enamelled cup. It has been conjectured that this was shewn him by Antoine de Pons on his return from Ferrara in 1539; but in any case Palissy began his experiments some years before 1543, that is *thirty-five* years at least before the delivery of his lectures. Either *twenty* is a mistake for *thirty*, or the *De l'art de terre* may have been written long before the lectures were delivered and have been added to them on publication. M. L. Solon, *Old French Faïence* [1903], pp. 30, 31, points out that Palissy never discovered the secret of white enamel, and he conjectures that the cup was not really enamelled but was made of very white china.

his experiments and explains his scientific theories. *Pourquoi me cherches tu une si longue chanson?* That is *Theorique's* criticism. Does it imply that we are to regard this moving narrative as *Dichtung und Wahrheit* rather than as the naked truth, as in part a parable set forth to illustrate his text that *on ne peut poursuyvre ny mettre en execution aucune chose, pour la rendre en beauté et perfection, que ce ne soit avec grand et extreme labeur*?

In the purely expository part of this volume, Palissy's style shews on the whole an improvement. It is as clear and logical as ever, but it is marked by greater care and greater correctness. But neither here nor elsewhere do we find, except on rare occasions, the picturesqueness and the imaginative power which Palissy's admirers ascribe to him. He is of the school of Calvin, not of the school of Rabelais.

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CHAPTER XXI

MONTAIGNE

We now come to the central figure of this third period of the French Renaissance, Michel de Montaigne. It is a name which has always had a pleasant flavour for Englishmen. From Shakespeare and Bacon to Edward Fitzgerald and Robert Louis Stevenson English men of letters have cherished him with a peculiar affection. Indeed Peter Coste in the preface to his edition of the *Essays*, published at London in 1724, declared that he met with a more favourable entertainment here than in his native country. The fact is that Montaigne appeals with equal force to readers of every nationality. "I regard all men," he says, "as my compatriots and embrace a Pole as readily as a Frenchman." Yet for all his cosmopolitanism, for all his detachment from time and place, his outlook on life is coloured like that of every writer by his age and his country, and we must understand these in order to read his book aright. Moreover seeing that his book expresses his own personality in a way in which no other book expresses that of its author, the details of his life have a special interest and significance. Many of these details we know from his own lips, but as it was no part of his design to leave a finished picture of himself, we must supplement our knowledge from other sources.

His family name was originally Eyquem. He assumed that of Montaigne, from a small estate purchased by his great-grandfather, Ramon Eyquem, a rich merchant of Bordeaux who trafficked in wine, salt fish, and woad. Here his father, Pierre Eyquem, was born in 1495, and, after

serving in the wars in Italy, settled down as a country gentleman, adding gradually to the estate and rebuilding the *château*[1]. In 1528 he married Antoinette de Louppes, whose father, the son of a Spanish Jew of the widespread family of Lopes, had settled as a merchant at Toulouse[2]. Antoinette was apparently a Protestant, and one of her sons and two of her daughters were either brought up as Protestants or became so later[3]. It was thus in his own family that Montaigne first learnt the lesson of religious toleration.

Pierre Eyquem had shewn originality in exchanging commerce for arms and a town life for that of a country gentleman. Though with little learning himself he had acquired in Italy a great respect for learning in others, together with some novel views on education which he proceeded to put into practice with his son Michel (the first of his children who survived infancy), who was born on February 28, 1533. Before he could speak he was put under the charge of a German tutor, named Horstanus[4], who knew no French and talked to him entirely in Latin. The same language was exclusively employed not only by two assistant tutors but by the whole household, including the maidservants, in their intercourse with the child. It must be remembered that it was the invariable custom in the grammar schools of the period to insist on Latin being spoken, but it was difficult to enforce this in home life[5]. Pierre Eyquem's innovation consisted in introducing it at this early stage and with such complete thoroughness.

It had been part of his original scheme to educate the boy at home for a considerable period, but he yielded to

[1] Montaigne's grandfather, Grimon, died in 1519. No particulars of Pierre Eyquem's campaigns are known, but he doubtless served in 1524 and 1525, and again in 1527. He married, says his son, *sur le chemin de son retour d'Italie* (II. ii, where he draws an interesting portrait of his father). It is possible that he may have taken part in the campaigns of 1515 and 1516.

[2] Malvezin, pp. 99 ff.

[3] *ib.* p. 124.

[4] R. Dezeimeris, *Renaissance de letters à Bordeaux*, p. 35.

[5] See a colloquy of Corderius (Cambridge, 1630, book ii coll. 50) in which one of the speakers is called *Montanus*.

custom, and sent him, when he was six, to the newly established and flourishing College of Guyenne at Bordeaux. Here Michel spent seven years (1539—1546), the staple of his education being Latin. After leaving the college he seems to have followed for two years the philosophy course of the University, the lectures for which were given within the walls of the college[1]. At this point our information fails us, but it may be regarded as almost certain that it was at Toulouse that Montaigne pursued the legal studies which were indispensable to a career as a magistrate[2]. He began this career in 1555 or 1556, when his father, now Mayor of Bordeaux, resigned in his favour his seat in the *Cour des Aides* at Périgueux[3]. At the close of 1557 this court was incorporated with the Parliament of Bordeaux.

The chief importance of this step for Montaigne was that it brought him into relations with Estienne de la Boétie, though it was not on the bench that he first made his acquaintance. Nearly all his biographers have dwelt on the influence which this friendship with a man two years older than himself, and his superior in learning, energy and character, had upon his future developement. Born at Sarlat in Périgord on November 1, 1530, La Boétie had taken his degree of

[1] This explanation, which is due to M. Bonnefon (pp. 41–3), seems the true one. Montaigne's father was one of the *jurats* of Bordeaux for 1546–7 and doubtless had to reside there. For the account of Montaigne's education see *Essais*, I. xxv. The term *précepteurs domestiques* which he applies to Buchanan, Guérente, Grouchy, and Muret doubtless means that they acted as 'tutors' in the sense common in English public-schools, as distinguished from class-teachers. Buchanan left Bordeaux in 1541, Guérente and Grouchy in the spring of 1547. Muret did not come there till the end of 1547. Grouchy lectured to the second-year students in philosophy. (See E. Gaullieur, *Hist. du collège de Guyenne*, pp. 89, 90; P. Hume Brown, *George Buchanan*, pp. 102—125.) It may be added that Muret's name was added in the ed. of 1582 and the word *domestiques* in that of 1588.

[2] Henri de Mesmes does not mention Montaigne among his fellow-students, but as he left Toulouse in 1548 this may be accounted for by Montaigne not having yet gone there. The law-school at Bordeaux was in a defective state.

[3] Pierre Eyquem was Mayor from Aug. 1, 1554, to Aug. 1, 1556; he may have resigned his judgeship at once, but certain forms must have been gone through before his son could take his place. The legal age for admission to the magistracy was twenty-five, but a dispensation was easily obtained.

licentiate of civil law at Orleans in 1553, and a month later had been appointed a councillor of the Bordeaux Parliament. He was a man of sound scholarship, and had translated Plutarch's treatise on Marriage and Xenophon's treatise on Domestic Economy, and, as we have seen, he was something of a poet. But his chief title to fame on his own account is the famous *Contr'un* or *Discours de la Servitude volontaire*[1]. Written when he was little more than a schoolboy, though doubtless revised when he was a law student at Orleans, it is to be regarded as a schoolboy's declamation rather than as a serious contribution to political theory[2]. But as a declamation it is exceedingly fine, and shews great promise of literary excellence. It was this work which was the immediate occasion of the celebrated essay on Friendship which Montaigne dedicated to his friend's memory[3]. It had been his intention to publish it among his *Essays*, but, having learnt that it had already appeared in a collection of revolutionary writings (Goulart's *Mémoires de l'état*), he changed his mind before the publication of his volume. Happily he allowed his own introductory essay to stand just as he had written it.

[1] The *Contr'un* was first published in entirety in vol. III of the *Mémoires de l'estat de France sous Charles IX*, edited by Simon Goulart, 1576, but two years previously a long extract had appeared in the second part of the *Réveille-matin*. There is also in the *Bib. Nat.* a MS copy made for Henri de Mesmes, upon which M. Bonnefon has based his text.

[2] De Thou's statement, that it was inspired by Montmorency's suppression of the sedition at Bordeaux in 1549, may be dismissed, as there is not a word of allusion to this event in the treatise. In the first edition of the *Essais* Montaigne said that La Boétie wrote it in his eighteenth year, *i.e.* in 1548, but later he corrected this to sixteen. Probably he had not any precise information on the subject. In any case the treatise must have undergone revision later, probably at the hands of La Boétie himself, for the words *notre poësie françoise...faite toute à neuf par nostre Ronsard, nostre Baïf, nostre du Bellay* could not possibly have been written before 1550, and hardly before 1552, when Baïf, then only twenty, published his first volume of poems. M. Bonnefon indeed conjectures that the whole treatise was written at this later date, when La Boétie was at Orleans, and that it bears traces of the influence of Anne du Bourg, at that time a law-professor at the University. (*Montaigne et ses amis*, I. 143—163.) This view of course involves throwing over Montaigne, and it is safer to assign the original composition to the earlier date, and to suppose that the work was revised later, which would account for the comparative maturity of the style.

[3] *Essais*, I. XXV.

Par ce que c'estoit luy, par ce que c'estoit moy[1]. These are the simple and immortal words in which he gives the reason for his friendship. If La Boétie recognised Montaigne's greater genius, in his turn he exercised a salutary influence on his friend's pleasure-loving and somewhat indolent nature, leading him by precept and example to a higher conception of duty and a more rigorous practice of self-control[2]. But the friendship was destined to be short-lived, or rather its earthly term was cut short in order that it might become eternal[3]. On August 18, 1563, La Boétie died, having bequeathed to his friend his books and his papers. A full and touching account of his last illness and death is given by Montaigne in a letter to his father[4].

On September 23, 1565, Montaigne married Françoise de la Chassaigne, the daughter of a fellow councillor. Though he had not married to please himself—"I would not have married Wisdom herself had she wanted me"—M^me^ de Montaigne made him an excellent wife, looking after his household and property (a task for which he himself shewed singular incapacity), respecting his humours, admiring his genius, and after his death cherishing his fame with loyal affection[5]. He in his turn seems to have been a kind and considerate husband.

The next event in his life was the death of his father on June 18, 1568, by which he became master of a considerable fortune including the *château* and estate of Montaigne. His first care was to complete a task which he had undertaken at his father's request, the translation of a Latin work entitled *Theologia naturalis*, by Raymond de Sebonde, the purport of

[1] These words were added in the edition of 1588.

[2] See the *satyre latine excellente*, addressed to Montaigne by La Boétie (*Œuvres*, 225 ff.).

[3] Montaigne says the friendship lasted four years ('four or five' in the original edition).

[4] *Œuvres*, edd. Courbet and Royer, IV. 307.

[5] She was born in 1544 and was therefore 21 at the time of her marriage; she died in 1627. Montaigne hardly ever refers to her in the *Essays*, but an affectionate letter to her, written in 1570, has survived (*Œuvres*, IV. 305). Some of her letters, written after his death, have been published (E. Richou, *Inventaire*, pp. 275 ff.).

which was to establish the truth of the Christian religion by nature and reason. The translation was indeed finished at the time of the elder Montaigne's death, but it had not been printed. It was now sent to the press, and it appeared early in 1569[1], but without the translator's name. Having paid this debt to his father's memory Montaigne proceeded to honour that of his friend, La Boétie, by publishing his translations from Xenophon and Plutarch, together with his French and Latin poems. They appeared early in the year 1571. It is noteworthy that the Latin poems are dedicated to Michel de l'Hospital in a letter which ends with a warm tribute to the ex-Chancellor's capacity and singular qualities[2]. Eighteen months before L'Hospital had resigned the seals, his policy of toleration having failed. This tribute from Montaigne to the fallen statesman, paid while civil war was still raging, testifies to his belief in that policy.

Soon after writing this dedication Montaigne resigned his seat in the Parliament of Bordeaux in favour of Florimond de Raemond, the future Catholic historian of Protestantism, and went to live in retirement on his estates. An inscription in his *cabinet* or study, dated on his thirty-eighth birthday (February 28, 1571), proclaims that weary of public life (*servitii aulici et munerum publicorum iamdudum pertaesus*) he had retired to the bosom of the learned virgins to spend there the rest of his days in repose and freedom from all care (*ubi quietus et omnium securus* [*quan*]*tillum id tandem superabit... exigat*)[3]. The inscription is characteristic, for after all there was nothing very remarkable in this retirement of Montaigne's from public life. His judicial duties were distasteful to him and he had his property to look after. And though he found by experience that the management of an estate was no more congenial to him than the work of a magistrate, he had always taken seriously his position as a landed proprietor.

[1] The printing was finished on Dec. 30, 1568.

[2] The letter of dedication is dated April 30, 1570.

[3] For the whole inscription see Galy and Lapeyre, p. 36. They oddly take *exigat* with *istas sedes* in the sense of 'to complete,' and in this they are followed by M. Bonnefon.

He might indeed have exchanged the gown for the sword, for a soldier's life sometimes appealed strongly to him, but in the present unhappy state of his country he was debarred by his principles from taking a side. He would fight neither for nor against the Protestants, so like Jean de la Taille[1] he retired to his estates and his books, and tried to put in practice those sentiments of

> Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis,
> Ut prisca gens mortalium,
> Paterna rura bobus exercet suis,

which so many of his contemporaries were expressing in verse.

The main building of Montaigne's *château* after frequent transformations was burnt down in 1885, but the famous tower, in which he had his library and his study, is still standing, and save for the gradual decay of the paintings and the increasing defacement of the inscriptions, is practically unchanged[2]. The library with the adjoining cabinet, *assez poly*, is on the second story, and here in summer Montaigne spent the greater part of the day. It is nearly circular in shape, the longer diameter being nearly twenty-seven feet and the shorter rather more than twenty-two feet[3]. From three windows it commands a wide view of the adjacent country in three different directions[4]. The books, which in 1588 numbered about a thousand, the greater part bound in white vellum, were ranged in bookcases round the room, each case containing five shelves. As we have seen, some of them had been bequeathed to Montaigne by La Boétie, and it was to La Boétie's memory that the whole collection was dedicated in an inscription which formerly adorned the frieze[5]. The

[1] See *ante*, p. 83.

[2] The *château*, which was rebuilt after the fire, is a mile and a half from the station of La Mothe-Montravel (36 miles from Bordeaux by rail and abont 20 from Bergerac). The present owner, the Marquise de Reverseau, inherited it from her father M. Magne, the Finance Minister of Napoleon III.

[3] See Galy and Lapeyre's plan; also Payen nº. 4 for illustrations and plans of the whole tower.

[4] *Essais*, III. 3.

[5] It was transcribed in the 18th century; see Bonnefon, I. 245.

presence of Montaigne's signature in from seventy to eighty volumes which still exist enables us with the help of various remarks in the *Essais* in some measure to reconstruct his library[1]. *Les historiens sont le vray gibier de mon estude*[2], and in conformity with this remark we find that thirty-one out of the surviving works relate to history. By far the most interesting is a copy of Caesar's Commentaries, covered with annotations in Montaigne's handwriting[3]. Among the modern historians the Italians are naturally the best represented. Montaigne also had a special liking for the Italian letter-writers, of whom he tells us that he had a hundred volumes. The best, he considered, was Annibale Caro, translator of the *Æneid*, and secretary to Pierluigi Farnese, Duke of Parma[4].

Thirteen of Montaigne's Italian books have survived, among them being two which deal with the subject of spiritual love, the *Dialoghi di amore* of Leo Hebraeus[5] and a translation of the Spanish romance *Il carcel de amor*[6]. There are thirty-five Latin books and eight Greek ones, but a copy of the *Odyssey*, covered with marginal notes, has unfortunately disappeared[7]. Montaigne was not much of a Greek scholar, and doubtless read his Greek authors, Plato and Aristotle, Herodotus and Xenophon, in translations, as we know he read his favourite Plutarch. But he had a copy of Froben's Greek and Latin edition (1560) of the *Lives*.

The most remarkable feature in the library was the Greek and Latin sentences painted on the beams of the ceiling[8]. *Ecclesiastes* supplies twelve, the majority of these being painted over earlier ones taken from other sources, the *Florilegium* of Stobaeus (chiefly the discourse *De superbia*)

[1] See P. Bonnefon, *La Bibliothèque de Montaigne* in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* II. (1895) 313 ff.; *Montaigne et ses amis*, I. 248 ff.

[2] In the later editions *sont ma droicte balle*.

[3] Printed by Plantin, Antwerp, 1570; it was bought on the *quais* for 90 centimes, and is now at Chantilly. See Payen, nº. 3, 29 ff.; Bonnefon, I. 263 ff.

[4] *Essais*, I. 39.

[5] Venice, 1549. This and two other volumes have the motto *Mentre puoi*.

[6] Venice, 1546; see *ante*, I. 51.

[7] It belonged to the elder Mirabeau (Bonnefon, I. 252).

[8] See Galy and Lapeyre.

eight, of which all except one are quotations from the Greek dramatists, St Paul's Epistles five, the Old Testament three, and Lucretius three. Only one modern writer has the honour of furnishing a text, and that is Michel de l'Hospital from whose epistle to Margaret, Duchesse de Berry, is taken

Nostra vagatur
In tenebris, nec caeca potest mens cernere verum[1].

With hardly an exception—Terence's *Homo sum, humani nil a me alienum puto* is one—all the texts repeat the same burden, the vanity and ignorance of man. Finally in long scrolls on the two main beams, as well as on four of the shorter joists, are inscribed twelve Sceptic *formulae*, chiefly taken from Sextus Empiricus.

During the years from 1571 to 1580 Montaigne lived for the most part quietly at his *château*, reading his books and writing his essays. He was occasionally absent from home for some months at a time[2], and on one occasion at least played a part in public affairs. In the spring of 1574 the commander of the royalist army of Poitou, the Duc de Montpensier, had established his camp at Sainte-Hermine, and Montaigne came there apparently for the purpose of offering his services. At any rate Montpensier sent him on a mission to Bordeaux to urge on the authorities the pressing necessity of taking vigilant precautions against a possible Huguenot attack[3].

Towards the close of 1579 the writing of the First and Second books of the *Essays* was completed and they were sent to Bordeaux to be printed by Simon Millanges, a former professor of the College of Guyenne. They appeared in the spring of 1580 in two volumes of unequal thickness and printed in different type[4]. Each book occupied a volume.

[1] *Epistolarum libri sex*, 1585, p. 84 (*lib.* ii). Though the collected edition of his poems was not published till 1585 several had appeared separately in his lifetime.

[2] *Les occasions me tiennent ailleurs par fois plusieurs mois* (*Essais*, III. 37).

[3] Montaigne refers to the mission, without mentioning its import, in his copy of Beuther's *Ephemerides*, which he used as a diary. The Bordeaux Parliament gave him audience on May 11 (Payen, nº. 2, p. 20). See also Bonnefon, I. 275 ff.

[4] The *avis au lecteur* is dated in the original edition March 1.

For the last two years Montaigne had suffered from attacks of the stone and gravel, and it was chiefly from a desire to try the effects of various foreign waters, though partly also from his innate restlessness and love of travel, that he left home on June 22, 1580, for a long absence. He was present at the siege of La Fère in Picardy by the royalist troops, when his friend Philibert de Gramont, the husband of *la belle* Corisande, was struck by a cannon-ball and died four days afterwards (August 6)[1]. After attending his friend's funeral at Soissons he started on his tour in company with his youngest brother, M. de Mattecoulon, then a lad of twenty, M. de Cazalis (probably his brother-in-law), M. du Hautoy, and a youth named Charles d'Estissac, doubtless the son of the lady to whom one of the Essays is dedicated[2], who was especially intrusted to his care. The first halt of any length was at Plombières in the Vosges, where Montaigne drank the waters for eleven days. From there the travellers passed through Switzerland to Augsburg, and so by way of Munich, Innsbruck, and the Brenner to Venice, which they reached on November 5. Travelling by way of Bologna, Florence, and Siena they arrived at Rome on November 30, and settled there for the winter. They left Rome on April 19, 1581, and after paying a visit to the famous Casa Santa at Loreto reached the Baths of Lucca on May 8. Here, except for a seven weeks' visit to Florence, Pisa and Lucca (June 21—August 14), Montaigne resided till September 12, taking the baths and drinking the waters. On the 1st of October he was back at Rome, where he found an official letter from the *jurats* of Bordeaux informing him that he had been elected to the office of Mayor on August 1, a piece of news of which he had already heard in a letter from a friend. He at first declined the honour, but he left Rome after only a short stay, and returned to France by the Mont Cenis, reaching his home on the 30th of November. Pressed to reconsider his decision, and receiving a letter from the King which amounted

[1] Payen nº. 3 p. 15; *Essais*, III. 4.

[2] II. 8. *De l'affection des peres aux enfants.*

to a command, he changed his mind and accepted the office[1].

In quiet times it was a responsible rather than a laborious post, and did not necessitate continual residence in the town. For the ordinary municipal duties were performed by the *jurats*, and it was only on special occasions that the intervention of the Mayor in person was required. The outgoing Mayor, the well-known Maréchal de Biron, who had also held the post of Lieutenant-general of Guyenne, had shewn more zeal than discretion, and had been generally unpopular. Montaigne's election was no doubt as much due to his known good sense and moderation as to the fact that his father had been Mayor before him. The new Lieutenant-general of the province was the Maréchal de Matignon, a man of conciliatory measures, whose capacity was equal to his tact[2]. France, as we have seen, had had a respite from civil war since the close of the year 1580, and the two years' term of Montaigne's office passed uneventfully, but with such satisfaction to the citizens of Bordeaux that on August 1, 1583, he was re-elected for a second term of office.

One of his first duties after re-election was to approve the statutes of his old college of Guyenne, which had recently been printed. But more troubled times were impending. The death of the Duc d'Alençon, the King's only brother, in June, 1584, left a heretic next in the succession to the crown, and at the close of the year the League was revived with a new and more efficient organisation for the express purpose of excluding that heretic from the throne. Even before this there had been some infractions of the peace. In December, 1583, the

[1] *Je m'en excusay. Mais on m'apprint que j'avois tort; le commandement du Roy s'y interposant aussi. Essais*, III. 10. It is not quite clear when Montaigne changed his mind. It would appear from the *Journal du Voyage* (III. 370) that he left Rome sooner than he had intended. But the King's letter is only dated November 25, and was addressed to Rome under the impression that Montaigne was still there (Bonnefon, II. 45). It is quite likely however that at Lyons the bearer of the letter, having heard of Montaigne's presence there on Nov. 15, sent it direct to his home, in which case he would have got it very soon after his arrival.

[2] Brantôme describes him as *un très-fin et trinquat normand, et qui battoit froid d'autant que l'autre* (Biron) *battoit chaud* (*Œuvres*, v. 159).

King of Navarre had seized the town of Mont-de-Marsan in Gascony, which formed part of the government of Guyenne, and Du Plessis-Mornay had written several letters to Montaigne on the subject, assuring him of his master's peaceful intentions[1]. A year later, on the 19th of December, 1584, the King of Navarre paid a memorable visit to Montaigne's *château* accompanied by some of the leading Protestant nobles, including Condé, Rohan, Turenne (the future Duc de Bouillon), Sully and Lesdiguières. It was a special mark of the King's confidence that he slept in his host's bed and ate his food without allowing the usual precautions against poison to be taken. The next morning they hunted in Montaigne's forest. The stag, Montaigne records with pride, was a good one[2].

On March 31, 1585, the Cardinal of Bourbon and other Catholic princes and nobles issued their manifesto, which was a prelude to war. About the same time the supporters of the League at Bordeaux began to conspire under the leadership of M. de Vaillac, but thanks to the energy of Matignon, ably seconded by Montaigne, the town remained unshaken in its loyalty[3]. The last two months of Montaigne's term of office were signalised by a terrible outbreak of the plague at Bordeaux and elsewhere in Guyenne[4]. There was a panic at Bordeaux, and some modern critics of Montaigne have declared that he should have set an example of devotion and courage by taking up his residence in the town. But he had his own family to look after, for the contagion had spread to the neighbourhood of his *château*, and it was necessary to establish them in a place of safety, which he found apparently at Libourne[5]. On the 31st of July his term of office expired.

[1] Bonnefon, II. 79—90.

[2] *Il n'y souffrait ny essai ny couvert, et dormit dans mon lit....Au partir de ceans je lui fis eslancer un cerf en ma foret qui le promena 2 jours.* Payen nº. 3 p. 16.

[3] See two letters of Montaigne to Matignon written in May, 1585 (*Œuvres*, IV. 349 ff.; Bonnefon, II. 119 ff.). And cf. J. Dussieux, *Lettres intimes de Henri IV*, pp. 56—66.

[4] 40,000 persons died at Bordeaux from June to December. See Montaigne's touching description of the plague in his neighbourhood, *Essais*, III. 12.

[5] His letter to the *jurats* of July 30 is dated from Libourne. (*Œuvres*, ed. Courbet and Royer, IV. 354.)

It was not till the close of the year that the cessation of the plague allowed Montaigne to return to his home. Here for the next two years he seems to have occupied himself chiefly with his books and his Essays, the only noteworthy incident being that Henry of Navarre dined with him on October 24, 1587, on his way to Sainte-Foy[1], four days after his victory at Coutras, the first victory gained by the Protestants since the outbreak of the civil war. By February, 1588, he had completed the Third book of his *Essays* and had made considerable additions to the First and Second books. Accordingly he set out for Paris to see about the publication of a new edition[2]. It appeared about the middle of June[3]. In the following month, Paris being now completely in the hands of the League, he made acquaintance with the inside of the Bastille, but was released before nightfall through the intervention of Catharine de' Medici[4]. Soon after this incident he paid a visit of some duration to Gournay-sur-Aronde in Picardy, the home of Marie de Gournay, a young lady whose enthusiastic admiration for the *Essays*, which she had read two or three years before, had led her to make the author's acquaintance at Paris[5]. Montaigne was at Blois when the Estates-General opened on October 15, having followed the Court there, as he had already followed it to Chartres and Rouen. Pasquier and De Thou have both left a record of conversations which they had with him at this time[6].

[1] *Henri IV, Lettres missives*, II. 602.

[2] It was on this journey that he was attacked by a band of Leaguers and stripped of his money and papers, but speedily changing their minds they let him go free and gave him back all his possessions. See his letter to Matignon (*Œuvres*, IV. 357) and *Essais*, III. 12.

[3] The privilege is dated June 4, and the preface June 12.

[4] Payen nº. 3 p. 17.

[5] She was the daughter of Guillaume de Jars and was born in October, 1565. See *Essais*, II. 17. Montaigne paid two or three visits to Gournay, spending in all three months there (Pasquier, *Lettres*, xviii. 1); M^lle^ de Gournay recorded her reminiscences of the visit in a romance entitled *Le Proumenoir de M. de Montaigne* which she sent to him in manuscript at the end of November, 1588, and which was published in 1594. For an account of her see Bonnefon, II. 315 ff.

[6] Pasquier, *loc. cit.*; De Thou, *Mémoires*, in Michaud and Poujoulat, XI. 330.

Montaigne returned home in October or November and tried to forget in reading and writing the frequent pain which his malady now caused him. Though he wrote no fresh Essays he was constantly adding to the old ones. From the numerous citations from Plato which appear for the first time in the posthumous edition[1] we may conclude that he read some of his dialogues at this period. In 1589 he carried on a correspondence with Lipsius, in whose praise he had introduced a passage in the last edition of the *Essays*[2]. A greater interest attaches to his correspondence with Henry IV, whose succession to the throne (Aug. 2, 1589) must have been medicine to his pains. Two of his letters to the King have been preserved. Both are models of manly frankness. The first, dated January 8, 1590, is of some length, and shews a statesmanlike appreciation of the political condition[3]. The second, dated September, 1590, is much shorter, being evidently an answer to an offer from the King of some post or other pecuniary reward[4]. His proud refusal reminds one of the famous passage in the King's letter to M. De Launay, "*Argent n'est pas pâture pour des gentilshommes comme vous et moi.*" "*Quand j'auray épuisé ma bourse aupres de Votre Majesté, je prendray la hardiesse de le luy dire,*" says Montaigne, and the words ring truer from one who is refusing money than from one who is asking for it.

Unfortunately Montaigne did not live to see the complete triumph of that royalist cause to which he had adhered with such singleness of heart and purpose. He died of quinsy on the 13th of September, 1592, in his sixtieth year[5].

Montaigne and his *Essays* have been judged with remark-

[1] Especially in I. xxiv and xxv.

[2] *Le plus scavant homme qui nous reste, d'un esprit tres-poly et judicieux, vrayment germain à mon Turnebus*, II. 12.

[3] *Œuvres*, IV. 356.

[4] *ib.* 363.

[5] Pasquier *loc. cit.* gives an account of his last moments, how, while mass was being said in his room, at the elevation of the Host *ce pauvre gentilhomme s'élance au moins mal qu'il peut, comme à corps perdu, sur son lit, les mains jointes, et en ce dernier acte rendit son esprit à Dieu.* But he was not an eyewitness of the scene. See also P. de Brach's letter to Lipsius (Bonnefon, II. 183).

able diversity of opinion, a result which would have given peculiar satisfaction to Montaigne himself. The chief questions which have been raised are the following. What was the main object of his book? Was it the study of himself as an epitome of mankind, or was it the teaching of a certain philosophy? What was this philosophy? To what extent was it sceptical? Was it a complete system, or was it merely the unformulated scepticism of a layman? Was it Montaigne's final attitude towards life, or was it a phase through which he passed to a more positive philosophy? What was his position with regard to the Christian religion? Was he a believer or a disbeliever, or was he simply indifferent? To answer all these questions with any certainty is possible to no one but Montaigne himself; but the most hopeful method of arriving at the truth that suggests itself is to trace the developement of the *Essays* from their first beginnings to their final stage.

It is important however to bear in mind at the outset that Montaigne, like Rabelais, is in the first place a poet and an artist, and not a philosopher or a moral teacher. As Ruel has well said, "his philosophy is the servant of his imagination, or rather of his sensibility." He regards alike the great world without him and the little world within him in an imaginative spirit. Like Shakespeare and Rembrandt he is at once a realist and an idealist; he looks on the phenomena of life curiously and dispassionately, but he interprets them by the penetrating light of his own imagination[1].

As we have seen, Montaigne began to write his *Essays* either in 1571 or quite at the beginning of 1572. His first 'attempts'—such was the modest name he gave to them[2]—

[1] The artistic side of Montaigne is admirably brought out in Ruel's book, *Du sentiment artistique dans la morale de Montaigne.*

[2] *C'est icy purement l'essai de mes facultés naturelles* (II. 10 beginning). This seems to justify De Thou's and Saint-Marthe's rendering of *Essai* by *Conatus*. G. Guizot (p. 69) thinks that Lipsius's *Gustus* expresses Montaigne's real meaning, and some support is given to this view by the passage *Le jugement est un util à tous subjects, et se mesle par tout. À cette cause aux Essais que j'en fay ici j'y employe toute sorte d'occasion. Si c'est un subject que je n'entende point, à cela mesme je l'essaye, sondant le gué de bien loing* (I. 50 beg.). A similar explanation is given in the dictionary of Hatzfeld, Darmesteter, and Thomas.

were extremely short; an anecdote or two, chiefly taken from his favourite study, history, with a few remarks by way of moral. Out of the first eighteen Essays, as they now stand, the only one in which there is no anecdote is the eighth, *On Idleness*[1]. All the anecdotes deal with the same subject, and that subject is man. In the very first Essay we meet with that estimate of him which Montaigne was never weary of proclaiming: *C'est un subject merveilleusement vain, divers et ondoyant, que l'homme.* In the eighth Essay he refers for the first time to himself, giving the reason for his retirement from public life, and saying that idleness had bred such queer fancies in his mind that in order to put it to shame he had begun to keep a register of them. In another place he tells us that he would have chosen the epistolary form for his fancies (*verves*) had he found a suitable correspondent, but that he could not write imaginary letters[2].

In the nineteenth Essay, *Que philosopher c'est apprendre à mourir*, which we learn he was writing on the 15th of March, 1572[3], he attempts for the first time a higher flight. The inevitability of death was, as we have seen, a favourite subject with the poets of the Pleiad school, but their treatment of it is at once less realistic and less imaginative than Montaigne's. His description of the death chamber, which forms the conclusion of the Essay, is one of the most striking passages of his book, and the whole Essay shews the hand of a master. Here too he gives us one or two personal details. He tells us the day and hour of his birth, and that he was *non melancholique, mais songecreux.*

Of the other Essays in the First book, which were already of considerable length on their first appearance, some, such as

[1] We may fairly assume that with some exceptions the Essays were written more or less in the order in which they were printed. The few that can be dated support this view, but it would be unlike Montaigne never to have departed from the chronological order. For instance the famous Essay on Education, which now stands twenty-fifth in the First book, cannot have been written before 1579, the year in which M^me^ de Gurson was married. Again the present I. 40 was numbered fourteen in the editions before 1595.

[2] I. 39 (added in 1588).

[3] *Il n'y a justement que quinze jours que j'ay franchi* 39 *ans.*

the twenty-second, the twenty-third, the thirty-eighth, the forty-second and the forty-seventh, cannot be dated; but the thirtieth (*On Cannibals*) must have been written after the death of Charles IX (May, 1574), and the two which relate to Estienne de la Boétie (37 and 38) belong to the year 1574. The famous Essay *On the Education of Children*, in which Montaigne gives an account of his own education with other personal reminiscences, is as late as 1579.

In the sixth Essay of the Second book, *On Practice*, written at the latest in 1574[1], Montaigne, after relating at considerable length the effects of a severe fall from his horse, concludes with "Everyone, as Pliny says, is an excellent discipline unto himself, provided that he has the capacity to pry into himself closely. I am not writing as a teacher, but as a student: it is not another man's lesson, it is my own[2]." At the beginning of the eighth Essay of the same book, *De l'affection des pères aux enfants*, addressed to M^me^ d'Estissac, he says that the idea of writing at all was put into his head by the melancholy humour, very foreign to his nature, which solitude had bred in him, and that, finding himself totally unprovided with a subject, he had taken himself for his argument. A little further on in the very interesting Essay *On Books* (II. 10), he warns his readers not to look for learning in his book. "These are but my fancies by which I endeavour not to make things known, but to make myself known."

It is not however till the seventeenth Essay, *On Presumption*, that he gives us a full-length portrait of himself. Hitherto he had confined himself chiefly to his opinions; now, after some apologies and an appeal to the authority of the Latin satirist Lucilius, he boldly launches forth in a detailed description of his appearance and character. But he is not quite easy about

[1] He begins his narrative with, *Pendant nos troisiemes troubles* (1568—1570) *ou deusiemes* (1567—1568), and says further on *Me sens encore, quatre ans apres, de la secousse de cete froissure* (ed. of 1580).

[2] *Ce n'est pas icy ma doctrine, c'est mon estude, et n'est pas la leçon d'autruy, c'est la mienne.* The chapter ends here in the ed. of 1580; in that of 1588 he added three or four pages on the subject of self-portraiture.

it, for the next Essay, *On giving the lie*, opens with a fresh apology, or rather with a justification of his design. It may be objected, he says, that though autobiography is excusable, even desirable, in a great man, no one cares to hear about an ordinary man. "This is very true, but it does not concern me. I am not erecting a statue to set up in the market-place, or in a church, or in any public place: it is to be hidden in the corner of a library, for the entertainment of someone who has a particular interest in making my acquaintance; a neighbour, a relation, a friend who will take pleasure in renewing my acquaintance in my portrait[1]."

There is much the same account of his book in the words addressed to M^me^ de Duras which form an *envoi* to the original edition, and in the short but famous preface. In the former he disclaims all pretension to be a man of letters: *je suis moins faiseur de livres, que de nulle autre besogne.* The only object of his foolish lucubrations (*ces inepties*) is to represent him as he naturally is. In the preface, he says that his book is for the particular benefit of his relations and friends: *C'est moy que je peins; Je suis moy-mesmes la matiere de mon livre.* But, as we have seen, this design of drawing his own portrait had been of very gradual growth, and it is only in one Essay, that *On Presumption*, that he has given full play to its execution.

His book was a great success, and immediately after his return from his travels he saw a second edition through the press, in which besides correcting the typographical errors of the first he inserted a few additional passages[2]. It appeared in 1582. During the intervals of leisure which his office of Mayor allowed him he doubtless continued his design, but it can only have been after the expiration of his second term of

[1] In the preceding Essay (II. 17), which must have been written immediately before this one, Montaigne speaks of himself as *engagé dans les avenues de la vieillesse aiant franchi les quarante ans.* M. Bonnefon takes this to imply that the essay was written about 1573, when he was forty, but it may surely imply any date up to 1576 or even later.

[2] The chief additions are the orthodox declaration at the beginning of the Essay *On Prayers* (I. 56), an addition to the Essay *On Presumption* (II. 17), and a short account of the Baths he had visited on his journey, added to II. 37.

office and the cessation of the plague that he was able once more to work at it without interruption[1]. As we have seen, he sent the new edition to the press early in 1588, and it appeared in June of that year, "augmented by a Third Book, and by six hundred additions to the first two books." The Third Book differs considerably in character from the two earlier ones. Montaigne writes now like a man who is sure not only of himself but of his public. The individual Essays are much longer and he now boldly proclaims his competence to deal with his subject. "No man ever treated a subject which he understood better than I do mine; in this I am the most learned man alive[2]." The ninth Essay, *On Vanity*, and the thirteenth, *On Experience*, are rich in details of his life and character. "I tell the truth, not to my heart's content, but as much as I dare; and as I grow older, I grow rather more daring[3]." But it is not only in the new Book, but in the additions to the earlier Books that his greater boldness appears. A good deal of the new matter, it is true, consists of quotations, of which he made only sparing use in the earlier editions, but a very considerable number of the additions relate to himself.

It has been sometimes said that because many of Montaigne's quotations are incorrect he must have quoted from memory. But M^lle^ de Gournay expressly tells us in her preface to the edition of 1635 that he inserted them book in hand, and he himself says much the same thing. "I am for ever rifling passages in books which please me, not in order to remember them, for I have no memory, but to transfer them to my book[4]." But as he used these passages merely to fortify opinions already formed he made no scruple in altering them a little if it suited him. His debts are by no means confined to quotations. He often pillages without

[1] He only wrote, he tells us, when he was at home, and cf. III. 5 *Pour ce mien dessein, il me vient aussi à propos, d'escrire chez moy*, etc.

[2] III. 2 (*Du repentir*). The beginning of this chapter is important for the understanding of Montaigne's design.

[3] *ib.*

[4] I. 24 (added in ed. of 1588) and cf. a passage in III. 12.

acknowledgement, taking, as he quaintly says, here a wing and there a leg, and in one place he speaks of his book as completely built up with the spoils of Plutarch and Seneca[1]. Yet for all this the book is one of the most original that was ever written. As Malebranche says, *tout copiste qu'il est il ne sent point son copiste.*

The practice of adding fresh matter to his old Essays was continued by Montaigne down to his death, so that when he died a new edition of his book was required in order to present to the world his final thoughts. To this pious task M^me^ de Montaigne, with the assistance of Pierre de Brach, devoted herself with loving care, with the result that in the early months of 1594, a year and a half after her husband's death, she was able to send to M^lle^ de Gournay at Paris the 'copy' of the new edition for publication[2]. It appeared in the course of the following year, 1595[3], and it is described on the title-page as "a new edition found after the author's death, revised by him, with additions amounting to a third more than the preceding editions."

Now the public library of Bordeaux possesses a copy of the 1588 edition evidently prepared for the press by Montaigne himself. There are minute typographical directions to the printer, and the margins are filled with additions in his beautiful writing, which though sometimes very minute is quite easy to read[4]. It is clear that this is the copy which Montaigne destined for the press. It is however equally clear that by itself it does not constitute the whole of his text as he left it. On some of the pages he has completely filled the margins, and here and there he has added a number which evidently refers to a separate sheet, either loose or, more probably, affixed to the printed page by some adhesive substance.

[1] I. 32 (opening sentence).

[2] R. Dezeimeris in his *Recherches sur la recension du texte posthume des Essais*, Bordeaux, 1866, has elucidated the matter satisfactorily; Bonnefon (II. 190 ff. and 373 ff.) practically agrees with him. A somewhat different view is taken by L. Manchon.

[3] Probably quite early in the year; the privilege is dated Oct. 15, 1594.

[4] The volume has unfortunately been badly 'ploughed' by the binder.

Comparing this Bordeaux copy with M^lle de Gournay's edition of 1595 we find a good many differences, but these chiefly occur in the new passages derived from the manuscript. The comparatively few alterations which Montaigne made in the actual text of 1588 have been adhered to by the 1595 editors with almost complete fidelity[1]. For instance, in the twenty-eighth Essay of the First book Montaigne has drawn his pen through all La Boétie's sonnets, and in the 1595 edition the dedication appears without the sonnets, a manifest absurdity, but a testimony to the editors' respect for their author.

On the whole from what we know of Pierre de Brach and M^lle de Gournay we have good reason for believing that they performed their task faithfully and well. No doubt in some cases they may have missed Montaigne's last intention, which must occasionally have been very difficult to trace through a series of erasures[2]: sometimes too perhaps, as M. Bonnefon conjectures, M^lle de Gournay may have permitted herself to tone down a word or phrase[3]; but on the whole we may be reasonably confident that variants in the text of 1595 from that of the Bordeaux copy correspond to subsequent alterations made by Montaigne himself on separate sheets, which no longer exist to give their testimony[4].

The practice of adding to his Essays, of inserting a passage here and a passage there, sometimes to the great detriment of the clear sequence of thought, is a peculiar feature in

[1] Comp. the page of which there is a facsimile in Petit de Julleville, III. 466 (II. end of c. 15 and beginning of c. 16).

[2] For instance, they have dated the *Avis au lecteur* June 12, 1580, instead of March 1, 1580, the manuscript correction for June 12, 1588, of the printed text. This was corrected by M^lle de Gournay in her edition of 1598.

[3] The passages cited by M. Bonnefon in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* III. (1896) 85 ff. hardly support his view.

[4] This view is practically the same as that of M. Bonnefon. It is, however, quite possible, as M. Dezeimeris supposes, that Montaigne had begun to annotate another copy. In any case I imagine P. de Brach, unless he was a very unpractical person, began to work on a clean copy. M^lle de Gournay says, "*Je pourrai appeler à témoin une autre copie qui reste en la maison de Montaigne*," which is evidently the Bordeaux copy. It should be added that M. Dezeimeris has noticed that some of the corrections in that copy are in the hand of M^lle de Gournay, writing no doubt at Montaigne's dictation.

Montaigne's peculiar book. "I add but I do not correct," he says in the Essay *On Vanity* (III. 9), and this is true of the ideas, if not of the language. It was even true to a great extent of the language at the time the words were written, for it was not till after the publication of the 1588 edition that Montaigne began to concern himself with minute details of style, even with orthography and punctuation[1]. This practice adds considerably to the reader's difficulty in getting to close quarters with the chameleon-like nature of the writer, and necessitates for those who want to judge him fairly a constant comparison of the different editions of his book. Even Montaigne himself complained in the 1588 edition that his readers did not always understand him aright. Yet he went on adding to the difficulty by fresh interpolations, or as he calls them, *emblèmes supernuméraires*, which had eventually to be published without his final revision[2].

From the foregoing account of the growth of Montaigne's book it will have appeared that the design of making himself the subject of it arose gradually in his mind, and that although by the time he had finished his First and Second books it was fully matured, it cannot be said to have borne much fruit until the appearance of the Third book and the additions made to the earlier ones. Whether this design was, as Montaigne himself suggests, *farouche et extravagant*, or, as Pascal says, *un sot projet*, it was at any rate a highly original one[3]. And the form which he gave to his design was equally original. He did not, as so many of his contemporaries did, write an autobiographical history. He had, as he tells us, a poor memory, and his object was truth. Moreover he could not "keep a register of his life by his actions, for fortune

[1] *Je ne me mesle, ny d'orthographe, et ordonne seulement qu'ils suivent l'ancienne, ny de la ponctuation: je suis peu expert en l'un et en l'autre* (III. 9). But in the Bordeaux copy he gives minute directions about spelling and punctuation to the printer.

[2] See Champion, pp. 276 ff.

[3] Pasquier's suggestion that Montaigne's book would have been improved by leaving out all that relates to himself is like saying that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* would be better without Hamlet.

placed them too low; he therefore kept it by his fancies[1]"; he recorded his fancies and his impressions, just as they presented themselves to his mind, not only with regard to external events, but with regard to his own character. If any circumstances in his past life had made a lasting impression upon him he noted them in his book, not as fragments of past history, but as permanent acquisitions to his store of mental or spiritual experience, and not in any chronological or other order by sequence, but just as they occurred to his 'vagabond' fancy[2].

The value of an autobiographical portrait depends largely upon the good faith and the skill of the painter. *C'est un livre de bonne foi, lecteur.* Even those who have taken the most unfavourable view of Montaigne's character have no doubt as to his honesty and sincerity[3]. Most students of his book will echo Emerson's remark that "the opinion of an invincible probity grows into every reader's mind." This is the character that he bore with his contemporaries. Moreover the very fact that he does not attempt to give us a finished portrait makes us all the more ready to believe in its substantial truth. "Though the features of my portrait change and alter, they go not altogether astray....I do not paint the whole being, but a passing state; not merely a passing from one age to another...but from day to day, from minute to minute....Whether it be that I am another man, or that I take hold of the subjects in other circumstances, and from other points of view, the fact is, that though I contradict myself at

[1] At the beginning of the essay *On Vanity* (III. 9), the most autobiographical of all the Essays.

[2] M. Champion in objecting that if Montaigne had really wanted to paint himself he would have written a complete history of his life (*Introduction aux Essais*, pp. 56 ff.) seems to lose sight of his peculiar method.

[3] *Montaigne n'a rien écrit qui fût vrai ni qui lui fît plus d'honneur que la première ligne de ses Essais: "C'est ici un livre de bonne foi."* G. Guizot, p. 42. Rousseau however in the first draft of the opening of his *Confessions* took a different view, saying, "*Je mets Montaigne à la tête de ces faux sincères qui veulent tromper en disant vrai. Il se montre, avec des défauts, mais il ne s'en donne que d'aimables: il n'y a point d'homme qui n'en ait odieux. Montaigne se peint ressemblant, mais de profil*" (quoted by Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, III. 80). As Desjardins says, *On traite quelquefois avec bien de la dureté ceux qu'on imite.*

random, I do not contradict the Truth[1]." And in another place he says, "I give my mind sometimes one face, and sometimes another, according to the side on which I turn it. If I speak of myself in different terms, it is that I am looking at myself in a different light[2]."

Fortunately we can place beside the portrait of the *Essays* a sketch which is not open to the charge of having been drawn for the world's inspection. The journal of Montaigne's travels was evidently written only for his own eyes and those of his family, and is therefore subject to no deductions either on the score of personal or of literary vanity. One third of it is written by a servant, another third in bad Italian, and only the remaining third by Montaigne himself in French. The general impression that we get from it is that he was a man of keen and active intelligence, always on the look-out for information, especially interested in comparing the social phenomena of different countries, unprejudiced and tolerant to a remarkable degree, quick in temper, kindly, not a little vain, somewhat egotistic, and possibly a little too fond of having his own way. Surely this character does not differ in its broad outlines from that presented to us in the *Essays*.

But while we accept Montaigne's statements that 'his book is one of good faith' and that 'he has brought to it the most sincere and complete accuracy[3],' it does not follow that we should take everything he says quite *au pied de la lettre*[4]. Some allowance must be made for the element of vanity in his character, some for the fact that, partly from irony, partly from what M. Faguet happily calls *gasconnade à rebours*, he has a tendency to exaggerate his defects; some for his propensity to indulge in *boutades*, or humorous and almost paradoxical sallies; and perhaps most of all for his strong artistic temperament. Had those critics who have judged him most hardly, Pascal and Guillaume Guizot, and in a far less degree Dean Church, united to their close familiarity with the *Essays* a better knowledge of his life and times,

[1] III. 2. [2] II. 1 (added in 1588).

[3] *La fidelité...la plus sincere et pure qui se trouve*, III. 2.

[4] See Bayle St John, II. 322.

they might have formed a more favourable estimate of his character.

On the whole then, though the portrait which Montaigne has drawn with such deliberation cannot be accepted as absolutely as the unconscious testimony of a Cellini or a Pepys, a Cicero or a M^me^ de Sévigné, it is true in its main features. And it has the great advantage over all those famous self-revelations, even over that of Pepys, that being deliberate it goes far more into detail. It is the literal truth that no document of equal importance for the study of human nature had ever before been given to the world. It may even compare with the series of documents on the same subject which the great English dramatist was on the eve of producing, and in the production of some of which he was certainly stimulated by the *Essays*[1]. For Montaigne's portrayal of himself was not the result of mere egotism, or of an uncontrollable yearning for the sympathy of his fellow-creatures; it was a deliberately planned contribution to the study of man. *Chasque homme porte la forme entiere de l'humaine condition*[2]. Living, as he did, chiefly in the retirement of his *château*, he had no wide experience of mankind at first hand; he knew men chiefly from books, from Plutarch and his favourite historians. One man alone he knew well, and that was himself. Moreover he believed himself to be an ordinary typical man, not, as most egotists do, a unique specimen of humanity[3].

His interest in human nature was too deeply implanted not to be innate, but it had been stimulated and cultivated by intercourse with two authors, Seneca and Plutarch. "I have had no intercourse with any serious author, except Plutarch and Seneca, from whom I draw like the daughters

[1] The influence of Montaigne on Shakespeare is admirably treated by J. M. Robertson in his *Montaigne and Shakespeare*, 1897. He shews that traces of Shakespeare's reading of Florio's translation (published 1603) first appear in the Second Quarto of *Hamlet* (1604) and are especially noticeable in that play and in *Measure for Measure*. See also G. Brandes, *William Shakespeare* (London, 1896) II. 226—235.

[2] III. 2.

[3] See Doumic, *Études*, p. 70.

of Danaus, filling and pouring out incessantly[1]." Of their writings he preferred Plutarch's *Moralia* and Seneca's *Moral Letters*. There can be little doubt that in Seneca's case his choice was a wise one. For the *Moral Letters* give a better idea than the formal treatises of his subtle insight into human nature, and of his skill in discussing ethical questions, while the informality of their method made them all the more attractive to Montaigne. *La science que j'y cherche y est traictee à pieces discousues*[2]. Moreover Seneca's ethics were just of the kind to find favour with Montaigne. They may be described indeed in the very phrase which M. Faguet applies to Montaigne's ethical creed, as *un stoicisme un peu attendri*. Not only Seneca's position as a powerful minister, but his natural sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men, led him to soften considerably the severity of the Stoic doctrine.

But on the whole Montaigne preferred Plutarch. *Plutarque est admirable partout, mais principalement où il juge des actions humaines* are the opening words of his Essay *On Anger* (II. 31), a subject which both Seneca and Plutarch had treated, and which therefore suggested the following Essay, *A defence of Seneca and Plutarch*. As we have seen, it was in the year 1572, just after Montaigne had begun to write his Essays, that Amyot's translation of Plutarch's *Moralia* appeared. We have seen too how warmly Montaigne acknowledged his debt to the work, a debt greater indeed than appears at first sight, for he sometimes incorporated Amyot's translation with hardly the change of a word into his own essays, the styles of the two authors blending so harmoniously that it is impossible to distinguish them[3]. Plutarch's ethical teaching is as little systematic and as little rigid as Seneca's; if he nominally belonged to the Academy, he was by no means a strict disciple of that school, for he revised its precepts in the light of his own common sense and geniality. For two reasons he must have appealed to Montaigne more persuasively than Seneca. First there is no

[1] I. 25 (added in the 1588 ed.).

[2] II. 10. Montaigne also borrowed from Seneca's other writings; I. 21 is taken almost bodily from his *De beneficiis*.

[3] See A. Delboulle in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* II. (1895) 604 ff.

question of his sincerity; he lived as he taught. Secondly his teaching is for the ordinary individual; he deals with the everyday ailments of the human heart, rather than with great crises and hidden diseases; he is the family doctor, while Seneca is the consulting physician[1]. "Seneca," says Montaigne, "moves and inflames you more; Plutarch satisfies you more, and repays you better; Seneca is stimulating, Plutarch is a guide." It was doubtless partly owing to Plutarch's guidance that Montaigne was led to the study of himself; from the same teacher he may have learnt to identify virtue with happiness, and happiness with tranquillity[2].

But whatever stimulus and guidance Montaigne may have derived from Seneca and Plutarch he was too independent to be the disciple of either. To the softened Stoicism of the one and the modified Platonism of the other he added a third element in the shape of Epicureanism. Yet he was no Eclectic. His philosophy of life was primarily for his own use, and not for that of the world. It had therefore to be moulded to meet his own needs and his own character. He and his book grew together. But regarding himself as an average man he believed that what was good for him would be good also for other men. Religion had apparently failed as an ethical guide; it had made men superstitious without making them moral. He would endeavour, not indeed to construct a complete system of ethical doctrine, but to contribute a few suggestions based on his own experience and on the special needs of the age. For instance two conspicuous vices of the age were cruelty and perfidy, and against these he raises his voice in unusual accents of stern and uncompromising severity[3].

[1] See O. Gréard, *De la morale de Plutarque*, 2nd ed. 1874.

[2] Desjardins *Les moralistes français du xvi^e siècle*, pp. 83—102 points out that the great jurists of Montaigne's day, Cujas, Doneau, Dumoulin, were greatly influenced by the Stoic element in Roman jurisprudence.

[3] See II. 11, *De la cruauté* (as essay which is of great importance for Montaigne's ethical doctrines); II. 17, *Quant a cette nouvelle vertu de faintise et dissimulation, qui est à cett' heure si fort en crédit, je la hay capitalement, et de tous les vices, je n'en trouve aucun qui tesmoigne tant de lascheté et bassesse de cœur*; II. 18 (*Du desmentir*), *Le premier traict de la corruption des mœurs, c'est le bannissement de la verité*. See also Desjardins, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

But in considering Montaigne's moral philosophy it is important to distinguish, and to remember that he himself distinguished, between the promptings of his imagination and the dictates of his reason, between his theories and his practice. His imagination for instance approves of the lofty idealism of martyrs and ascetics, or runs riot in depicting the pleasures of the senses; but in practice he obeys his reason, and his reason teaches him moderation and self-control[1]. "For my part, I love life and cultivate it as it hath pleased God to grant it to me....I accept cheerfully and gratefully what nature has done for me, and am pleased with it and proud of it....Of philosophical opinions I more willingly embrace those which are the most solid, that is to say the most human and the most our own....Nature is a gentle guide, yet not more gentle than she is prudent and just. I hunt everywhere for her trail; we have confounded it with artificial traces, and for this reason the sovereign good of the Academics and the Peripatetics, which is 'To live according to Nature,' becomes difficult to define and explain. So with that of the Stoics, which is akin to it, and which is 'To conform to Nature.' Is it not an error to esteem certain actions less worthy, because they are not necessary? Yet they will never convince me that the marriage of pleasure with necessity is not a most suitable one, with which, saith an ancient writer, the gods ever conspire....These transcendent humours terrify me, like lofty and inaccessible places, and nothing I find so hard to digest in the life of Socrates as his ecstasies and his intercourse with dæmons....It is an absolute perfection, and as it were divine, for a man to know how to enjoy his being loyally. We seek for other conditions, because we understand not the use of our own; and we go out of ourselves from not knowing what is passing within.... The fairest lives to my mind are those which are regulated after the ordinary human pattern, without miracle, without extravagance." This is the conclusion of the *Essays*.

It is characteristic of Montaigne's idea of treating man in

[1] Cf. Ruel, *op. cit.* p. 412, *Montaigne a un double idéal, un idéal pratique ou du moins qu'il voudrait mettre en pratique, et un autre, artistique, que le plus souvent son admiration pour l'antiquité fait apparaître à son imagination.*

general through a single individual that his views on education refer chiefly to a particular case. The Essay *On Pedantry* (I. 24) is indeed of general application, but the longer and more important one *On the Education of Children* (I. 25) was written for the benefit of the expected child of M^me^ de Gurson, who like the rest of his class—Montaigne assumed that it would be a boy—would probably take up the profession of arms at the age of fifteen or sixteen. This limitation to the requirements of a small and privileged class necessarily narrows the scope of Montaigne's educational views; but many of his precepts are of general import, and his central thought that the object of education is character and not learning is the true basis of all sound education[1]. For he maintains that its object is to make a man better[2], "to teach him self-knowledge, how to die well and to live well." The body should be exercised as well as the mind[3] and the principal lessons of the mind should be in moral philosophy. The teacher should not merely burden his pupil's memory but should stimulate his originality and inspire him with an "honest curiosity for information about everything." Education should be largely practical and not merely from books[4]. Foreign travel and intercourse with men are therefore recommended, and intercourse with men should consist chiefly of an acquaintance with the great men of history, for which purpose there can be no better introduction than Plutarch's *Lives*[5]. This crusade against mere book-learning and this insistence on the practical side of education lead Montaigne sometimes to lose his balance, as when in the latter part

[1] See F. A. Arnstädt, *F. Rabelais und sein Traité d'Éducation*, pp. 168—242; G. Schmid in K. A. Schmid, *Geschichte der Erziehung*, III. i. 208—255, Stuttgart, 1892.

[2] *Le gain de notre estude, c'est en estre devenu meilleur et plus sage* (I. 25).

[3] *Ce n'est pas une ame, ce n'est pas un corps, qu'on dresse; c'est un homme* (*ib.*). So Locke, who owed a good deal to Montaigne, heads his *Thoughts concerning education* with *Mens sana in corpore sano.*

[4] *Il ne dira pas tant sa leçon comme il la fera* (*ib.*).

[5] It is interesting to compare with Montaigne's views those expressed by Du Plessis-Mornay in a letter to Louise de Coligny, widow of the Prince of Orange, for the benefit of her son, Frederick Henry. (In E. Réaume, *Morceaux choisis des prosateurs et poètes français du xvi^e^ siècle*, pp. 223 ff.)

of the Essay *On Pedantry* he praises Spartan education at the expense of Athenian, and even goes so far as to eulogise the Turks and Tartars and other unlettered races. A youth, even of the class with which Montaigne is specially concerned, who was brought up in strict accord with his principles would become narrow and unimaginative; his practical understanding would be developed at the expense of his higher powers[1].

It has been remarked that there is no question in this Essay of religious teaching[2]. The same omission is equally noticeable in Montaigne's whole ethical system. Whatever his debt to pagan teachers, he owes nothing, at least directly, to the Sermon on the Mount. Indeed one Essay at least, and one which in its profound knowledge of human nature and its frank sincerity is one of the most remarkable of the whole book, that *On Repentance* (III. 2), is almost anti-Christian in spirit. Montaigne believes that a man is born with certain qualities which may be developed or kept in check by education and self-discipline, but which cannot be wholly changed. We may repent of sins foreign to our nature which we commit under the influence of sudden passion, but he finds it difficult to believe in repentance for those sins which being the result of temperament we commit frequently and deliberately. If he had to live his own life over again he would live as he had lived. All this is very true of the natural man, but it leaves Christianity out of account. And that briefly represents Montaigne's attitude towards the Christian religion. "He admits it as a belief, but he puts it aside as a moral code[3]." In all ages this attitude is not an unusual one with ordinary men of the world, but in Montaigne's day it may be said to have been the normal attitude with all classes[4]. We have seen instances of it in the lives of Ronsard and Desportes; it colours the whole

[1] According to Coleridge a child's memory and imagination should be first cultivated, because they are first awakened by nature, but the judgment, or comparing power, ought not to be excited.

[2] Collins, *Montaigne*, p. 114.

[3] L. Joubert in *Nouv. Biog. Gén.*

[4] *Une époque où croire et vivre étaient deux choses distinctes et indépendantes.* A. Vinet, *Moralistes*, p. 18.

poetry of the Pleiad; and it reaches its culminating height in the mixture of bloodthirstiness, debauchery, and grotesque superstition which made hideous the court of Henry III.

Naturally a man so clear-sighted and sincere as Montaigne was not wholly blind to this inconsistency, and in the Essay *On Prayers* (I. 56), to which in the edition of 1582 he prefixed a formal profession of adherence to the Catholic Church, he refers to the well-known story of the *Heptameron* in which the Queen of Navarre relates how a young prince (Francis I) who had a *liaison* with an advocate's wife used on his return from visiting her to pray at length in a certain church[1]. But though Montaigne's eyes were open to the glaring inconsistency of cases like this he never applied his common sense to the examination of his own attitude. It was this breach between morality and religion which the religious revival in France set itself to heal, and which led the Jesuits to accommodate religion to the morality of the man of the world, and the Jansenists to raise ordinary morality to the higher standard of religion.

We are now in a better position for attempting an answer to the question as to the extent and nature of Montaigne's scepticism. But it may first be noted that those writers who have insisted most emphatically on the thorough-going character of his scepticism cannot be said to have approached the subject with an unbiassed mind. Some have been over-anxious to claim him as a champion of free thought, while others have shewn a similar anxiety to repudiate him as an enemy to the Christian religion[2]. As M. Faguet aptly remarks, *On est toujours le sceptique de quelqu'un.*

The true starting-point for the consideration of Montaigne's scepticism is the recognition of the fact that like most intellectual phenomena of the Renaissance it has its origin

[1] *Nouv.* xxv. The conversation after the story is an excellent commentary on Montaigne's Essay *On Repentance.*

[2] Owen, *Skeptics of the French Renaissance*, speaks of him as 'a genuine untiring inquirer'; Emerson takes him as the type of a sceptic; for Pascal he is 'a pure Pyrrhonist'; for G. Guizot 'scepticism is the heart and centre of the Essays.'

in classical literature. In the year 1562 Henri Estienne published a Latin translation of Sextus Empiricus, practically the only Sceptic writer of antiquity whose works have come down to us. It was from Sextus that Montaigne derived the Sceptic formulas with which he adorned the joists and rafters of his library, and it was from the same writer that he borrowed freely in the famous Essay, the *Apologie de Raymond de Sebonde* (I. 12), in which his sceptical views are stated with the greatest completeness.

Montaigne tells us that two classes of objectors had found fault with Sebonde's book, the orthodox because it was useless, for Christianity can only be apprehended by faith, the unbelievers because its arguments were feeble and inadequate. Both objections Montaigne meets in his usual original fashion. The first, he admits, would hold good if we had a real living faith in Christianity; but "we are Christians only by the same title as we are Germans or inhabitants of Perigord[1]." The second class of objectors are "more dangerous and more malicious"; they must be handled a little more roughly. As they presume to attack a divine religion with purely human weapons the best way of meeting them is to convince them of the "emptiness, the vanity, the miserable condition of Man." This of course, as Montaigne sees quite well, is to abandon the defence of Sebonde, for the object of his book was to prove Christianity by 'reason and argument.' But Montaigne is evidently not at all concerned about Sebonde; so leaving him to take care of himself he embarks on a long discourse on the vanity of natural man "deprived of grace and divine knowledge[2]." After comparing him, not to his advantage, with beasts, he declares that his greatest misfortune is his so-called knowledge. It is better to be ignorant than to pretend to know; even philosophers have arrived at no result. Man's conception of God is a purely anthropomorphic one, based on the idea that man is the centre of the

[1] This sentence was added in 1588; the whole chapter is about a third longer in this edition than it was in that of 1580.

[2] On the other hand Montaigne's ethical views are based on a high estimate of human nature. Virtue, he says, is easy and pleasant. (I. 19, 25.)

universe. Our knowledge of human affairs is no greater than our knowledge of God, and we are equally ignorant of our own souls. Not only philosophers differ, but individual opinion is always changing. Public opinion is equally unstable. Man does not even know what he wants. Our very senses are untrustworthy. The conclusion is that human nature of itself is abject and vile, and that Man's only chance of elevation above his vile nature lies in the Christian faith. The second part of this proposition is stated very briefly, and it has already been invalidated by Montaigne's previous declaration that true Christian faith does not exist.

Those writers who take Montaigne's scepticism most seriously point out that this Essay is by far the longest in his book, and therefore, they add, the most important. I doubt the correctness of this inference. There is much in the Essay that is paradoxical and not a little that is puerile. A good deal is borrowed from Sextus Empiricus and Diogenes Laertius, from Cicero and Plutarch. Its unusual length may be accounted for partly by the fact that it is addressed to some great person[1], partly by the literary vanity natural to an author who having mounted his favourite hobby-horse is anxious to shew off its paces to the best advantage. The Apology, in fact, is best described in the words of M. Stapfer as a pendant to the Essay *On some lives of Virgil* (III. 5)[2], that other debauch of Montaigne's reason. For in its sweeping scepticism it goes far beyond any modern philosopher, not excepting Hume. Yet the man who heaped paradox on paradox to prove the vileness of man, who declared that the best man deserved hanging ten times in his life[3], was an ardent admirer of Socrates and Epaminondas and Scipio. Even in his own, as it seemed to him, degenerate age, he

[1] *Vous, pour qui j'ay pris la peine d'estendre un si long corps, contre ma coustume*, and *Vous, qui par l'authorité que vostre grandeur vous apporte...pouvez d'un clin d'œil commander à qui il vous plaist.* There is an old tradition that the person addressed was Margaret of Valois, wife of Henry IV. (See note by J. V. Leclerc in his edition.)

[2] *Montaigne*, p. 81.

[3] III. 9. Cf. Shakespeare's "Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?"

could admire L'Hospital and La Noue and his friend La Boétie, of whom and of friendship generally he writes in terms that are almost transcendental. So far from conforming to custom, like a true sceptic, as the only possible moral law, he hated every kind of cruelty, and protested against duelling as a barbarous and irrational practice. He also believed firmly in the existence of a beneficent and all-directing God.

But we must not push this line of argument too far. That Montaigne had a good share of what Hume calls 'mitigated scepticism' there can be no doubt. New discoveries, a new world, a new solar system, had impressed upon him the instability of human knowledge. The condition of his unhappy country, torn with civil war, bankrupt in money and credit, contemptible in the eyes of other nations, had led him to take a low estimate of human virtue. If his scepticism was "corrected by common sense and reflection[1]," if it was warmed by the impulses of a rich and imaginative nature, it was still there, indolent, unsystematic, paradoxical, but coming to his contemporaries with the charm of novelty, and charming them all the more by its very defects. For it was not so much the rhetorical fireworks of a set piece like the Apology which appealed to them as the general tone and character of Montaigne's mind, his hatred of dogmatism, his habit of bringing all questions, even scepticism itself, before the bar of common sense and daily experience[2]. The Latin treatise of Cornelius Agrippa *On the incertitude and vanity of learning* had only appealed to a small audience[3]. But now while men still more or less believed in that theme upon which Pico della Mirandola had nearly a century ago discoursed so eloquently, the dignity of Man, there came one who told them in language which they could all understand that Man was vile and that

[1] "There is indeed a mitigated scepticism...which may be both durable and useful and which may in part be the result of this *Pyrrhonism* or excessive scepticism, when its undistinguished doubts are, in some measure, corrected by common sense and reflection." Hume, *Works*, IV. 187.

[2] See W. E. H. Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe* (ed. of 1882), I. 92 ff. There is a just and sensible account of Montaigne's scepticism in Lanusse, pp. 134 ff.

[3] It was translated by Louis Turquet in 1582.

much of his pretended knowledge was a sham. It was like the pleasant shock of a cold douche.

This altered estimate of Man and his works may possibly have had its origin in the Copernican theory of the solar system. If our planet is not the centre of the Universe, what becomes of the microcosm, Man? Other planets may be inhabited by beings infinitely greater in knowledge and virtue. Further it may be noticed with less of conjecture that Montaigne's scepticism is a natural developement of that spirit of free inquiry which was the motive power of the Renaissance. While in Rabelais this spirit inspired a hopeful desire to make the world better and wiser, in Montaigne it tended to *ἀταραξία*, to a resigned conservatism alike in ethics, politics, and religion.

Le sceptique est celui qui ne croit pas à la science et qui croit à lui-même....Le douteur est le vrai savant : il ne doute que de lui-même et de ses interprétations, mais il croit à la science. So said one of the greatest of modern men of science[1]. In Montaigne's day science was in its infancy, and for science in the strict sense he had no aptitude. He was neither a Paré nor a Palissy. But in his own field, the study of human nature, his method was almost scientific. He doubted that he might know, and he based his knowledge on investigation and experiment. His laboratory was his own mind; he entered it as free from bias as is humanly possible, and he stated his results with an astonishing candour and sincerity. And it is this better side of his scepticism which bore the fairest fruit in the immediate future. The free-thinkers of the first half of the seventeenth century, Des Barreaux and Théophile de Viau, La Mothe le Vayer and Saint-Évremond, who found in Montaigne an incentive to self-indulgence and intellectual dilettanteism, are of far less importance than Pascal, who borrowed from his sceptical armoury weapons for the defence of revealed religion, or than Descartes, who built upon the basis of doubt a complete metaphysical system[2].

[1] Claude Bernard, *Introduction à l'étude de la médecine expérimentale.*

[2] There is a good and sensible account of Montaigne's philosophy by L. E. Kastner in the *Modern Language Quarterly* for April, 1902.

There is one point on which censors and admirers of Montaigne are alike agreed, and that is the splendour of his style. On this subject it is perhaps his severest critics who have expressed themselves with the most unqualified approval, as if their severity was partly due to a determination not to allow their reason to be led captive by his genius. It is Pascal who speaks of "the incomparable author of *The Art of Conversation*"; it is Guillaume Guizot who says that "he is the most complete" of French writers, and that "his resources of style are infinite."

In the translation of Sebonde's *Natural Theology* Montaigne had shewn that he could handle a difficult subject in a style remarkable for simplicity and extreme clearness. But the style is quite unadorned and has no individuality. For the true Montaigne we must go to the dedicatory letter to his father which stands at the head of his translation, or to the long letter in which he gives him an account of La Boétie's illness and death, or to the dedications which he prefixed to each group of La Boétie's works. Thus when he began to write the Essays he was already in possession of an admirable style, subtle and supple, fitting the thought as a glove fits the hand. If in the earliest essays it is still somewhat cold and colourless, this fault is soon mended, and before long Montaigne handles his instrument with perfect ease and assurance. The passage in which he describes his favourite style will serve as a specimen of his own :

> Le parler que i'ayme, c'est vn parler simple et naif, tel sur le papier qu'à la bouche : vn parler succulent et nerueux, court et serré, plutost difficile qu'ennuieux, esloigné d'affectation et d'artifice : desreglé, descousu et hardy : chaque lopin y face son corps : non pedantesque, non fratresque, non pleideresque, mais plutost soldatesque, comme Suetone appelle celuy de Julius Cæsar[1].

Tel sur le papier qu'à la bouche. That is not an inapt description of Montaigne's own style, of which Emerson says, "I know not anywhere the book that seems less written. It is the language of conversation transferred to a book." Montaigne would have relished that remark, for as we have

[1] I. 25 (text of 1580). The passage was somewhat altered in the ed. of 1588.

seen he says of himself, "*Je suis moins faiseur de livres que de nulle autre besogne.*" But he deceived himself. If his book seems to be spoken rather than written, this is the result of a deliberate intention, of an elaborate art. The favourite style of the day, formed as it was on Latin models, had something artificial in it. Montaigne determined to be sincere even in his style. His style should be a reflexion of his own downright, brusque and impulsive nature. It should imitate the natural eloquence of a good talker who never hesitates for the right word. That is the reason why it is sometimes difficult to follow his meaning. As he admits himself, he passes from one subject to another, as in conversation, without any connecting words, *sans l'entrelasser de parolles, de liaison, et de couture, introduictes pour le service des oreilles foibles, ou nonchallantes*[1]. Another cause of his obscurity, at least to the inattentive readers of whom he complains, is his love of digressions. *O Dieu! que ces gaillardes escapades*[2], he says of Plutarch, and it is equally true of himself. He wrote in much the same way as he travelled, having indeed a fixed goal, but reaching it only after many deviations from the straight course. The Essay *On Coaches* (III. 6) will furnish a good example of his method. It is not long, especially in the edition of 1588.

It is obvious, he begins, that great writers are wont to give several reasons for things besides the one which they believe to be the true one. For instance, what is the reason for blessing people when they sneeze? What is the cause of sea-sickness? He believes he has read in Plutarch that it is due to fear. This he doubts from his own experience, for though he is often sea-sick he is never in any fear at sea. Here follows a digression on the nature of fear. Riding in a coach or litter, especially a coach, affects him in the same way as being on board ship. Mark Antony was the first Roman to drive lions in a coach, and Elagabalus drove even stranger teams. The mention of these inventions suggests another observation, namely that excessive expenditure shews weakness in a monarch. This leads to a somewhat long discussion

[1] III. 9. [2] *ib.*

on the difference between extravagance and true liberality in princes, followed by an account of the Roman Amphitheatre, chiefly taken from the Seventh Eclogue of Calpurnius. Compared with the ancient world, our modern world shews signs of decrepitude and exhaustion. But a new and infant world, in no way inferior to ours in magnificence, has been recently discovered. This leads to a most eloquent description of the conquest of Peru and Mexico, full of sympathy for the conquered, and of indignation at the cruelty of the conquerors. *Retombons à nos coches.* In Peru they do not use coaches, but litters. The last king of Peru was being carried in a litter when he was captured in battle.

The central thought of this Essay is apparently the reprobation of extravagant pomp and magnificence, which suggests a comparison between the ancient world and the new world of Mexico and Peru in the matter of magnificence. But it looks as if the whole train of thought had been set in motion by the stories of the strange teams which Mark Antony and Elagabalus harnessed to their coaches. Hence the title of the Essay, and hence Montaigne, with true artistic instinct, returns before its close to the motive from which he had set out[1].

The above is a summary of the Essay as it appeared in 1588; in the text of 1595 there are several additions. In this case they do not interfere with the thread of the argument; but in many of the Essays the later additions, which of course formed no part of the original plan, give them a more disconnected and desultory air than they have in the text of 1588, or than they would probably have had if Montaigne had definitely revised his text.

In one respect as his work progressed he introduced a decided improvement in its literary form; he made his sentences shorter. We have seen that the besetting sin of sixteenth century prose is the unwieldy length of the sentence,

[1] M. Stapfer and M. Ruel have also selected this Essay as an example of Montaigne's method, and Ruel gives an admirable analysis of it. (See Stapfer, *Montaigne*, p. 127; Ruel, *op. cit.* 374 ff.) My balder summary originally appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*, 1890.

and in the ordinary text of the *Essays* there are plenty of long sentences, some indeed of quite remarkable length. But this is in a large measure due to the system of punctuation adopted by Naigeon in his edition of 1802, which is not Montaigne's any more than the orthography, but which subsequent editors blindly followed. In the reformed text of MM. Courbet and Royer the numerous colons and semi-colons are replaced by full-stops[1]. This is in accordance with a direction given by Montaigne to his printer. *C'est un langage coupé, qu'il n'y espargne les poincts et lettres majuscules*[2]. But it is not merely a question of punctuation. Though from the first Montaigne, with his true artistic instinct, often relieved his long sentences by short ones, his tendency as his style developed was to make all his sentences shorter.

It is remarkable that Estienne Pasquier notes as a special feature of the *Essays* that it is *un vrai séminaire de belles et notables sentences.* He then proceeds to quote eighteen which La Rochefoucauld might have envied. Yet he omits many of the most striking, such as: *Tout abregé sur un bon livre est un sot abregé; Touts jugemens en gros sont lasches et imparfaicts; La plus grande chose du monde c'est de savoir estre a soy; En nostre langage je trouve assez d'estoffe, mais un peu faulte de façon*[3].

Next to the realism or impressionism—whichever you like to call it—of Montaigne's style its most remarkable feature is its imaginative character. Metaphor succeeds metaphor in careless profusion. The following passage is a good illustration of this quality:

A qui n'a dressé en gros sa vie à une certaine fin, il est impossible de disposer les actions particulieres. Il est impossible de renger ses pieces, à qui n'a une forme du total en sa teste. A quoy faire la provision des couleurs, à qui ne sçait ce qu'il a à peindre? Aucun ne fait certain dessein de sa vie, et n'en deliberons qu'à parcelles. L'archer doit premierement sçavoir où il vise, et puis y accomoder la main, l'arc, la

[1] A good instance will be found in the Essay *On Coaches* in the passage beginning, *La liberalité mesme n'est pas bien.*

[2] Bordeaux MS (Courbet and Royer, v. 4).

[3] Montaigne's apophthegms are noticed by Villemain, *Éloge*, p. 25.

corde, la flesche, et les mouvemens. Nos conseils fourvoyent, par ce qu'ils n'ont pas d'adresse et de but. Nul vent fait pour celuy qui n'a point de port destiné[1].

Nor is it merely in the use of metaphor that Montaigne's imagination reveals itself; he is fond of picturesque words, words which call up a sensuous image, and in which the French language of the sixteenth century was particularly rich. It is with justice that the chapter in which Malebranche criticises Montaigne is entitled '*On the Imagination*,' and one can understand Montesquieu's meaning when he speaks of him as 'one of the four great poets[2].' Sainte-Beuve rightly compares him with Ovid and Ariosto, for it is in liveliness and rapidity rather than in concentrated power that his imagination excels. Occasionally, however, as in the well-known description of the death-chamber, to which I have already referred, he can paint in a few words a complete and striking picture:

Je croy à la verité que ce sont ces mines et appareils effroyables, dequoy nous l'entournons, qui nous font plus de peur qu'elle: une toute nouvelle forme de vivre: les cris des meres, des femmes, et des enfans: la visitation des personnes estonnees, et transies: l'assistance d'un nombre de valets pasles et éplores: une chambre sans jour: des cierges allumez: nostre chevet assiegé de medecins et de pescheurs: somme tout horreur et tout effroy autour de nous. Nous voyla des-ja ensevelis et enterrez[3].

Montaigne belongs to that somewhat small class of writers who write for the eye rather than for the ear. His style as a rule is wanting in the rich harmony which is so distinguishing a feature of Rabelais. Yet occasionally this feature is also present, as in the magnificent description of philosophy in the Essay *On the Education of Children*, or in the following description of Paris:

Je ne veux pas oublier cecy, que je ne me mutine jamais tant contre la France, que je ne regarde Paris de bon œil. Elle a mon cœur des mon enfance. Et m'en est advenu comme des choses excellentes: plus j'ay veu depuis d'autres villes belles, plus la beauté de cette cy, peut, et gaigne sur mon affection. Je l'ayme par elle mesme, et, plus en son

[1] II. 1 (*De l'inconstance de nos actions*).

[2] His other three are Plato, Malebranche, and Shaftesbury.

[3] I. 19.

estre seul, que rechargee de pompe estrangere. Je l'ayme tendrement, jusques à ses verrues et à ses tasches. Je ne suis François que par cette grande cité : grande en peuples, grande en felicité de son assiette : mais sur tout grande, et incomparable en varieté, et diversité de commoditez : la gloire de la France, et l'un des plus nobles ornements du monde. Dieu en chasse loing nos divisions : entiere et unie, je la trouve deffendue de tout autre violence. Je l'advise, que de tous les partis, le pire sera celuy qui la metra en discorde[1].

But his ordinary style is a style *comique et privé,...trop serré, desordonné, coupé*[2]. Add to this its rich imagery and you have a style as unlike as possible to that which made French prose so illustrious in the days of Louis XIV. Yet the man of genius to whom the triumph of this new prose was due was evidently a close student not only of Montaigne's thought but of his style. For he learnt from Montaigne that there can be no really great prose unless it is touched with emotion, and unless it is the sincere expression of the writer's thought.

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The last edition has a critical apparatus giving the various readings of the original editions and of the MS additions inserted by Montaigne in a copy of the 1588 text which is preserved in the municipal library at Bordeaux. In 1802 an edition was published in 4 vols. by Naigeon, based on this copy, but as the readings were not faithfully reproduced, it is

[1] III. 9 (*De la vanité*).

[2] I. 39. *Comique* means 'familiar,' the style of comedy as opposed to that of tragedy.

of no value. Some of the more interesting readings are given by Gustave Brunet in his *Les Essais de Michel de Montaigne, Leçons inédites*, 1844.

An edition shewing in a convenient form the successive stages of the *Essays* and furnished with a sufficient commentary is still much needed. See R. Dezeimeris, *Recherches sur la recension du texte posthume des Essais*, Bordeaux, 1866; L. Manchon, *De la constitution du texte des Essais* in *Léon Manchon*, Laval, 1886.

M^lle de Gournay published at least ten editions subsequent to that of 1595; of these the most interesting are that of 1598, in which the long preface of 1595 is replaced by a much shorter one; that of 1611, the first edition with the names of the authors of the quotations; and that of 1635, dedicated to Richelieu, with some changes in the text and with the original preface restored in a modified and improved form.

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Life.

Dr J. F. Payen, an ardent admirer of Montaigne, formed a large and important collection of documents relating to his life and writings. These are now preserved in the *Bibliothèque nationale*, and a catalogue has been published by G. Richou, *Inventaire de la collection des ouvrages et documents réunis par J. F. Payen et J. B. Bastide sur M. de Montaigne, suivi de lettres inédites de Françoise de la Chassagne* (Mme de Montaigne), 1878. Payen published in his life-time four series of *Documents inédits* in 1847, 1850, 1855 and 1856 respectively. Another important contribution to the biography of Montaigne is T. Malvezin, *Michel de Montaigne, son origine, sa famille*, Bordeaux, 1875. All these materials have been utilised in the excellent life by P. Bonnefon, *Montaigne, l'homme et l'œuvre*, 4to. 1893, with numerous illustrations and facsimiles; reprinted in *Montaigne et ses amis*, 2 vols. 1897. See also the *Notice* by E. Courbet in vol. v. of Courbet and Royer's edition, 1900. The older English life by Bayle St John, 2 vols. 1858, is sensible and appreciative.

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CHAPTER XXII

THE FOLLOWERS OF RABELAIS

It was inevitable that a writer of such marked individuality of style as Rabelais should produce a crop of imitators, and that these imitators, failing to catch any reflexion of his real genius, should attach themselves to his peculiarities, or even to his defects. The grosser imitations, such as *Le disciple de Pantagruel* under its various titles or the *Mythistoire Barragouyne de Fanfreluche et Goudichon*, may be left out of account[1]. But there were writers who, while the form and style of their works mark them as true disciples of Rabelais, yet retain enough of independence to give them a place in literature. For the one lesson that they learnt in common from their master was of sufficiently wide interpretation to cover much difference of treatment. This lesson was the possibility of obtaining a hearing for the discussion of grave topics under the cloak of broad laughter. Lacking however for the most part Rabelais's deep vein of humour, which enlivens the most ordinary matters by a sympathetic touch, they were left to the short story or *conte* as their chief resource for raising laughter.

Hence these writers are generally classed in histories of French literature under the heading of *conteurs*, though this title by no means expresses the real aim and character of their

[1] See F. A. Arnstädt, *F. Rabelais und sein Traité d'Éducation*, Leipsic, 1872, pp. 68 ff.

work. It is in fact hardly better suited to them than it is to Rabelais himself[1]. They are really essayists in form, and observers, for the most part satirical observers, of society in substance. Indeed all of them are inferior in the art of telling a story to two men who figure elsewhere in this history, Henri Estienne and Agrippa d'Aubigné. Before, however, coming to these followers of Rabelais mention must be made of a writer whose book does consist exclusively of stories, and of stories told, not in the off-hand manner of the essayists, but with the amplitude and detail of the *Heptameron*—in a word *nouvelles* rather than *contes*.

In the year 1571, when the peace of Saint-Germain (August 1570) had given a respite to the horrors of civil war, Jacques Iver or Yver, a gentleman of Poitou, was moved by the success of the French translation of Bandello to write some original stories of a similar character[2]. Bandello had published the first three parts of his *Novelle* in 1554[3], and his work, as the production of a French bishop (for he had been appointed to the see of Agen in 1550), had immediately attracted attention in his adopted country[4]. In 1559 Pierre Boaisteau, who had just edited the *Heptameron*, and François de Belleforest produced translations of some of the stories, Boaisteau translating six and Belleforest twelve. These were republished together in 1568, and the work was continued by Belleforest alone, a second volume appearing in 1569 and a third in 1570[5].

Yver now set to work to rival Bandello, adopting a similar framework for his stories to that of the *Heptameron*. The tellers of the stories are three gentlemen and two ladies who meet at the *château* of Printemps, the ladies being the daughter and niece of the *châtelaine*. By Printemps is evidently meant

[1] Marty-Laveaux says very truly, *Les bibliographes et les critiques ont jadis enfermé Rabelais dans la catégorie des conteurs, mais l'importance de son œuvre a brisé l'étroitesse de ce compartiment*, Petit de Julleville, III. 72.

[2] See Yver's preface.

[3] At Lucca.

[4] Bandello took refuge in France about the year 1530.

[5] The fourth part of Bandello's *Novelle* was published at Lyons in 1573, after his death, and in 1582 and 1583 the sixth and seventh volumes of the French translation were published.

the celebrated *château* of Lusignan[1], distant sixteen miles from Poitiers, which on Shrove-Tuesday 1574 was surprised by the Huguenots, and after a siege of nearly four months' duration capitulated in January 1575 and was razed to the ground[2]. Yver's stories are all of considerable length, each being supposed to occupy a day in the telling. As in the *Heptameron* they are preceded and followed by a discussion. As might be expected from a rival of Bandello they are all of a thoroughly romantic and tragic character. The manner of telling them is somewhat diffuse and artificial, and the style is wanting in ease and directness, but a certain air of distinction saves it from being wearisome. The most noteworthy of the five stories is the first, which relates to the loves of Eraste and Perside, the scene being laid in Rhodes. It furnished the theme for an English tragedy, *Solyman and Perseda*[3], at the close of the sixteenth century, and for several French plays and a novel by M^lle^ de Scudéry in the next century[4]. The scene of the second story is laid at Mainz, of the third at Mantua, of the fifth at Padua, while the fourth relates to William the Conqueror.

The author did not live to enjoy the popularity of his *Printemps*, for he died in 1572 before its publication. In the same year it went through three editions, which had increased to eleven by the end of the century[5]. It also produced some imitations, such as *L'Été* by Benigne Passenot (1583) and *Le Printemps d'Été* by Nicolas de Montreux. An English translation by Henry Wotton was published in 1578 under the title of *A Courtlie Controversie of Cupid's Cautels*[6].

[1] It was said to have been built by the Fairy Melusine.

[2] D'Aubigné, *Hist. Univ.* bk vii. c. 13 (IV. 311); Brantôme, *Œuvres*, v. 16—20.

[3] Printed in 1599 and ascribed to Kyd by both Dr Ward and Mr Boas. It is the 'play within the play' of *The Spanish Tragedy*.

[4] See E. Sieper in *Zeitschrift für vergleich. Litt.* IX. 33 ff.

[5] The first edition was published at Paris by L'Angelier, the second at Antwerp, the third at Paris (copy in the Brit. Mus.), the fourth at Antwerp, 1573, the fifth and sixth at Paris, 1575 and 1576.

[6] Only two copies are known to exist, one in the British Museum and the other in the Bodleian; both are imperfect. The translator must not be confused with Sir Henry Wotton. It may be noted here that a French translation of the first

While *Le Printemps d' Yver* is modelled on the *Heptameron* and consists wholly of tragic stories told at some length, *Les escraignes dijonnoises* is a collection of short tales of the popular *gaulois* type like those of the *Joyeux Devis*. But they have none of the merits of that remarkable work, or indeed any other merit. They appeared in 1588, the author being Estienne Tabourot, who was born at Dijon in 1547, became *procureur du roi* in 1582 and died in 1590. Previous to the *Escraignes dijonnoises* he had published a far more interesting work which he whimsically entitled *Les Bigarrures du Seigneur des Accords*[1]. It consists almost entirely of essays on various artificial forms of verse, such as rebuses, *vers rapportés*, *équivoques* or puns, and leonine verses. There are also chapters on anagrams and epitaphs, so that the whole book throws a good deal of light on the literary fashions of Tabourot's day. It had considerable success, editions appearing in each year from 1583 to 1586. A copy of the second edition was sent by the author to Estienne Pasquier, who acknowledged it in an interesting letter[2]. In 1585 a second part was added, consisting only of three chapters, of which one, like the first book, deals with the subject of French verse[3]. This new edition included the first instalment of the *Apophtegmes du Seigneur de Gaulard*, an imaginary person whose 'pleasant, witlesse and simple speeches' are meant to be humorous. Tabourot also wrote five books

part of Straparola's *Piacevoli notte* by Louveau appeared in 1560 and one of the second part by Pierre Larivey in 1573, and that in 1584 that indefatigable translator from the Italian and Spanish, Gabriel Chappuys of Tours, published his *Les facétieuses journées*.

[1] The first known edition, that of 1583, is not the first; this must have been published in 1581 or 1582 and was probably only a small volume. The publisher, writing in 1581, says the book was first put into his hands 'about *four* years ago,' and in the edition of 1584 *four* is altered to *eight*.

[2] *Lettres*, VIII. 14. I have already had occasion to refer to this letter in discussing the authorship of the *Joyeux Devis* (*ante*, I. 259).

[3] Tabourot calls this new book the *fourth*, *car ce volume entier ne seroit pas bien bigarré s'il suivoit la façon des ordinaires écrivains*. The *Bigarrures*, *Apophtegmes*, and *Escraignes dijonnoises* with a portion of *Les Touches* were first published together at Lyons in 1603. (See Turner cat. 2nd part, no. 3953.)

of epigrams not without merit, which he entitled *Les Touches du Seigneur des Accords.*

Of the writers visibly inspired by Rabelais the first in the field and the first in merit was Noel du Fail, a gentleman of Brittany, who lived partly on his property, nine miles from Rennes, and partly at Rennes itself first as advocate and then as judge[1]. After studying at Paris, serving as a volunteer in Italy (1543—1544) and reading law at various French universities, Angers, Poitiers, Bourges, etc., he published in 1547 and 1548 respectively under the name of Leon Ladulphi (an imperfect anagram of his name) two little books entitled *Propos rustiques* and *Baliverneries.* Estienne Pasquier, writing to Ronsard in 1555, speaks of him as a *singe de Rabelais*[2]. This is an uncritical remark, for, though Du Fail is an evident admirer of Rabelais and frequently refers to him in his book, his style is his own and only resembles that of his master in a few peculiarities. The chief of these is a certain coquetry in the choice of his words and in the construction of his periods, apparently with the object of giving to his language that air of exuberance and gusto which is characteristic of Rabelais. In Du Fail's case this often leads to obscurity, which is increased by the frequent allusions to provincial customs. Sometimes however the effect is happy enough. The following account of a certain Robin Chevet will give an idea of the style:

> Voulentiers apres souper, le ventre tendu comme vn tabourin, saoul comme Patault, iazoit le dos tourné au feu, teillant bien mignonnement du chanure, ou raccoustrant, à la mode qui couroit, ses bottes (car à toutes modes dordinaire saccoustroit lhomme de bien), chantant bien melodieusement, comme honnestement le sçauoit faire, quelque chanson nouuelle, Iouanne sa femme de lautre costé qui filloit, luy respondant de mesmes. Le reste de la famille ouurant chascun en son office, les vns adoubans les courroyes de leurs fleaux, les autres faisans dents à Rateaux, bruslans hars pour lier (possible) laixeul de la charrette, rompu par trop grand faix, ou faisoyent vne verge de fouet de mesplier, ou meslier[3].

[1] He was born according to F. Frank at the end of 1526 or the beginning of 1527. (See *Baliverneries*, ed. Courbet, I. p. li.) He died in 1591.

[2] *Lettres*, I. viii.

[3] *Propos rustiques*, ed. A. de la Borderie, p. 36.

But Du Fail's merit lies less in his style than in his realistic pictures of country life and his sketches of country character. In his next volume, *Baliverneries ou contes nouveaux d'Eutrapel*, a larger part is given to the *conte*, but even here his chief preoccupation is the portrayal of country life and the quasi-dramatic presentation of character. The description of a peasant's cottage in the fourth chapter is excellent, and the story which follows of Dame Goute and M^lle^ Hyraigne (Araigne) is told with great liveliness. In this book the setting is furnished by the friendly meetings of Eutrapel (Noel du Fail), Polygame (his elder brother François) and Lupolde, a lawyer (Colin Briant), the gay and impetuous character of Eutrapel being contrasted with the calm good sense of the grave Polygame.

After the publication of the *Baliverneries* Du Fail devoted himself to the duties of the legal profession, and it was not till the close of the year 1585, when he was on the point of resigning his post of councillor in the Parliament of Brittany, that he published *Les contes et discours d'Eutrapel*. Considerably longer than the two works of his youth, it is also, in spite of some coarse stories, much graver in tone. We are again introduced to Eutrapel and his friends, and their conversation turns, not as before on local customs, but on general topics of the day. The reformation of the judicial system and the church is what the writer has most at heart, and it is interesting to find him approving of the proposal to secularise all church property which was put forward by the Third Estate at Orleans in 1560, and which he here ascribes to the celebrated jurist Charles du Moulin[1]. Like his earlier books the *Contes d'Eutrapel* throws considerable light on the manners and general life of the day, and there is frequent mention of contemporaries. From the purely literary point of view it must be confessed that the book often suffers from two common faults of sixteenth-century literature, pedantry and want of proportion. There is however considerable charm in the chapter entitled *Du temps present et passé* (c. xxii). The stories too are told with much liveliness and

[1] C. ix. and see c. i. (*De la justice*). C. xxxiv. is a defence of Christianity.

a considerable sense of humour, as for example the fable of the clay pot and the iron pot (c. ii), the story of Eutrapel and the Fiddler (c. xviii), that of the bishop who could not bear any mention of death, and the well-known one from Plutarch of the senator whose wife could not keep a secret (both in c. xxxiii). Many of the stories are extremely coarse both in thought and language, but however much we may regret this, it serves to remind us that in Du Fail's day such licence was compatible with grave and enlightened views of society, and with genuine religious feeling.

Though on the title-page of the book the author is described as the late Seigneur de la Herissaye, this seems to have been merely a whimsical allusion to his contemplated retirement, for as a matter of fact he lived nearly six years longer, dying in 1591.

The publication of Du Fail's last volume was perhaps due to the success of Montaigne's *Essais* and it is noteworthy that about this time several works were published, which, while in many features they bear traces of Rabelais's influence, yet by their miscellaneous and desultory character shew a decided affinity to Montaigne. Thus in the year 1585, the year of the publication of the *Contes d'Eutrapel*, a certain Seigneur de Cholières, about whom very little is known, but who was apparently a native of Maine[1], published a volume entitled *Les neuf matinées*, which was followed in 1587 by *Les Apresdisnées*. He was a follower of Rabelais and a man of some erudition, of which he makes a considerable display in his books. They are in the form of conversations, which turn on law, medicine, philosophy, astrology, and other less important subjects.

There are few stories, and these are told very briefly; in spite of the attempt at gaiety the general tone is heavy and commonplace. The writer was evidently a lover of style and

[1] In another work the dramatist Robert Garnier is described as his compatriot (P. Lacroix, *Œuvres*, I. iv.), and in the *Apresdisnées* one of the speakers says 'Notre voisin de Touraine' (II. 41). Lacroix points out that the statements that he was an advocate of the Parliament of Grenoble and that his Christian name was Nicolas are both devoid of authority.

language, and though Rabelais is his obvious model he cannot be reproached with following him slavishly. But his power of playing with words is a long way inferior to his master's, and he is never able to shake off the appearance of effort. His favourite poet seems to have been Du Bartas, whom he not unfrequently quotes.

Similar in title to *Les Apresdisnées* are the *Serées* of Guillaume Bouchet, the worthy bookseller whom we have met before as forming one of the literary group of Poitiers. He was older than his friends, having been born in 1513. The first book of the *Serées* appeared in 1584, but the complete work in three books, with considerable additions to the first book, was not published till 1608, fourteen or fifteen years after his death[1]. He makes no attempt to imitate Rabelais, writing in an unaffected familiar style. But he frequently refers to him as well as to Montaigne, Bodin, Ronsard, and Pibrac. The stories are very numerous—there must be something like eight hundred altogether—and they are told with great brevity and no attempt at artistic presentation. The *Serées* are in short a kind of commonplace book, the result of the author's discursive reading, arranged in thirty-six chapters or *serées*, the titles of which correspond very fairly well to their contents. For unlike Rabelais and Montaigne, Bouchet had an orderly mind. His book attained considerable popularity, fresh editions being published down to 1635. It is a book to read in, rather than to read continuously, and that not for its artistic merit, but for the light that it throws on sixteenth-century thought and society.

The *Serées* and the *Apresdisnées* are mild Symposia, but *Le Moyen de parvenir* is rather of the nature of a debauch. Alike in form and in substance it is a caricature of the licence which characterises so much of the writing of the French Renaissance. The men and women who take part in these unbridled conversations are drawn from all ranks and all ages, but their remarks make no pretence at being characteristic of the distinguished persons who are supposed to utter them. The book is a satire on the human race, but such wit and

[1] He died, aged 80, in 1593 or 1594.

wisdom as it contains lie so deeply buried in rubbish and filth that few people at the present day are likely to be at the pains of searching for them. Moreover, to use Rabelais's metaphor in the famous prologue to *Gargantua*, the marrow in this case is hardly worth the trouble of sucking the bones. The author, François Beroalde de Verville, as he pleased to style himself, was the son of Matthieu Beroald[1], a native of Picardy and a zealous Protestant, who at one time kept a school at Paris, Agrippa d'Aubigné being one of his pupils. The son, stimulated by his father, acquired a mass of ill-digested learning on many subjects, including alchemy. Already in 1584, when he was only twenty-eight, he figures in La Croix du Maine's bibliography as the author of many works[2]. These he continued to produce in abundance, but only *Le Moyen de parvenir*, which was published between 1612 and 1620, has attained any celebrity.

The excessive licence of thought and language which disfigures the book was now fast becoming an anachronism. By 1620 M^me^ de Rambouillet had rebuilt her *hôtel*, and was conducting in her famous blue chamber her campaign against grossness. Though the old practices lingered on in bacchanalian songs and burlesque plays it ceased to be possible for a man of genius to roll in filth. Woman avenged herself on Rabelais. He had almost banished her from his book. She almost banished him from polite society.

[1] He had been educated at the expense of his mother's relative, François Vatable, the great Hebrew scholar. His real name was Brouart, but he called himself Beroald to please Vatable; his son added an *e* to the name.

[2] In 1583 he published a poem entitled *L'idée de la république*.

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CHAPTER XXIII

MEMOIRS AND LETTERS

1. *Brantôme, Margaret of Valois, Henry IV, Monluc, La Noue.*

I HAVE suggested that some of the books discussed in the last chapter, published as they were in the years 1584 and 1585, and written for the most part by country gentlemen who were also lawyers, were prompted not only by frequent reading of Rabelais but by the signal success which attended Montaigne's *Essays*. It is also possible that the same success may have prompted another gentleman of Perigord, M. de Brantôme, to engage in a similar undertaking[1]. It is at any rate pretty evident from the only two passages in which Brantôme mentions Montaigne that he regarded him and his *Essays* with a certain dislike and jealousy. It especially vexed him that the order of St Michael should have been conferred on one who had worn the lawyer's gown[2].

Yet the two gentlemen of Perigord had a good deal in common. Like Montaigne, Brantôme pretended to be careless of literary fame, but in reality took every pains to secure it; like Montaigne he loved digressions, *gaillardes escapades*, from his main theme; like Montaigne he has drawn for us, though in his case unconsciously, a portrait of himself; like Montaigne he was curious of information, fond of travel and books. But these points of similarity are after all superficial; the difference is fundamental. While Montaigne tested the world and

[1] This idea has occurred to Prof. Saintsbury, from whom I may have unconsciously borrowed it.

[2] *Œuvres*, ed. Lalanne, v. 92: see also vi. 497.

society by the light of his shrewd common sense, Brantôme accepted them without question or reflexion. Montaigne was essentially a thinker, Brantôme was merely a reporter; Montaigne was a moralist, for Brantôme the word morality had no meaning. Montaigne criticised his age, Brantôme reflected it. That indeed is Brantôme's chief value, that he reflects his age like a mirror, but it must be added that he reflects chiefly its more trivial, not to say its more scandalous side. He is the Suetonius of the French Renaissance.

Pierre de Bourdeille, "reverend father in God, abbé de Brantôme," belonged to a noble and ancient family of Perigord[1]. The precise date of his birth is uncertain, but it must be placed somewhere between 1539 and 1542. He spent his childhood with his grandmother, Louise de Vivonne, wife of the seneschal of Poitou, at the court of Margaret of Navarre, and after studying first at Paris and then at Poitiers, travelled for more than a year in Italy, returning to France at the beginning of 1560, when he made his first appearance at the Court. Though he already held other benefices besides the abbey from which he took his title, he was not in orders. The next fourteen years were spent by him either in fighting on the Catholic side in the religious wars, or in attendance at the Court, or in travel. In 1574 his military career came to an end, for his duties as gentleman of the chamber, to which post he had been appointed in 1568, kept him at Court, frivolous, idle, and discontented. At last the refusal of Henry III to bestow on him the promised post of governor of Perigord filled him with such fury that he determined to enter the service of Spain. But a fall from his horse, which kept him in bed for four years (1583–1587), saved him from being a renegade to his country and turned him into a man of letters[2].

For it was during this forced inactivity, apparently in 1584, that he began his literary labours, which he continued for the

[1] Brantôme is 9 miles north of Périgueux and Bourdeille is 4 miles from Brantôme.

[2] See his preface I. 4 and V. 211. Brantôme wrote an autobiography which was still in existence at the beginning of the 17th century. (*Rev. d'hist. litt.* IV. 287.)

next thirty years, most of which he spent on his estate. He died in 1614, leaving a will of portentous length, in which, among other things, he charged his heirs to have his works printed *en belle et grand lettre et grand volume*. The charge was neglected, and it was not till 1665–1666 that an incomplete and defective edition was published at Leyden, in the Elzevir form. Previous to this, however, several copies had been made of his manuscripts, and Le Laboureur in his edition of Castelnau's Memoirs, published in 1659, had printed long extracts.

Brantôme was a disappointed man when he wrote his memoirs. He had been an assiduous courtier for a quarter of a century and had gained nothing by it, while he had seen men whose merits he believed to be inferior to his rise to wealth and honour[1]. But though he had the love of frivolity and the moral indifference of a true courtier, he had not his pliability. "He was violent," says Le Laboureur, "difficult to live with and of a too unforgiving spirit[2]." Perhaps the best thing that can be said in his favour is that among his most intimate friends were two of the most virtuous characters of their time, Téligny, the son-in-law of Coligny, whom he calls his *frère d'alliance*, and Téligny's brother-in-law, François de la Noue. Among his other friends were Louis de Bérenger, seigneur du Guast, who was assassinated by order of Marguerite de Valois, and above all Filippo Strozzi, the son of Piero Strozzi, who was his friend for over twenty years[3], and who exercised over him considerable influence.

The names by which Brantôme's writings are generally known are not those which he himself gave them. Thus the titles *Dames illustres* and *Dames galantes* are an invention of the Leyden publisher for the *Premier et Second livre des Dames*. The other main division of his writings, *Hommes*, consisted in Brantôme's manuscript of two volumes,

[1] *Œuvres*, v. 396.

[2] Quoted by Lalanne, *Brantôme*, p. 331.

[3] *Je l'ay pratiqué fort familièrement l'espace de trente ans ou plus.* But Strozzi was killed in 1582, and it is very doubtful whether Brantôme made his acquaintance before 1560.

the first containing the *Grands capitaines*, French and Spanish, and the second *Les couronnels*, *Discours sur les duels*, *Rodomontades espagnoles*, and a separate account of La Noue. His original manuscript was completed while Margaret was still the wife of Henry IV, that is to say before November 1599, but some time after her divorce he made a carefully revised copy. It is upon this copy that the text of M. Lalanne's edition is based for the first five volumes (*Hommes*)[1].

Regarded strictly as biographies Brantôme's lives have slender merit, for the majority give one little or no idea of the character of the persons treated. He is least successful with those who had in them elements of real greatness, such as Coligny and Condé[2]. Even the long life of François de Guise[3], though it contains some interesting and valuable information, throws little light on Guise himself. But he gives us good superficial portraits of Charles IX[4], Catharine de' Medici[5], and the Constable de Montmorency[6], while several of the minor lives, such as Brissac and his brother Cossé[7], Matignon[8], and Mary of Hungary[9], are not only amusing but hit off the characters with considerable success. One of the most entertaining is the unfinished account of his father[10]. On the other hand the account of Margaret of Valois, though it contains some interesting details, is too ecstatic in its open-mouthed admiration to have any value as a biography. The conclusion of the account of Monluc may be quoted not only for its reference to Monluc's conversational powers, but as throwing light on Brantôme's own character:

Or, pour fin de ce discours, M. de Montluc a esté un très-grand, brave et bon capitaine de son temps : et il le faisoit beau ouyr parler et discourir des armes et de la guerre, ainsi que j'en ay faict l'expérience, moy ayant esté sur la fin de ses jours un de ses grandz gouverneurs, et mesmes au siège de La Rochelle et à Lyon, lorsqu'il fut faict Mareschal de France, j'estois fort souvent avec luy et m'aymoit fort, et prenoit grand plaisir quand je le mettois en propos en entrain, et

[1] This edition is divided as follows: *Grands capitaines*, I—IV. V. 1—296; *Couronnels*, rest of V.; *Discours sur les duels*, VI.; *Rodomontades* and minor treatises, VII. 1—303; *Dames*, rest of VII. VIII. IX.; *Opuscules*, *Poésies*, X. This vol. also contains a glossary, and vol. XI. a full index.

[2] *Œuvres*, IV. [3] *ib.* [4] V. [5] VII. [6] III.
[7] IV. [8] V. [9] VIII. [10] X.

luy faisois quelques demandes de guerre ou autres choses; car je ne suis jamais esté si jeune que je n'aye tousjours esté fort curieux d'apprendre; et luy, me voyant en ceste voulonté, il me respondoit de bon cœur et en beaux termes, car il avoit une fort belle éloquance militaire et m'en estimoit davantage. Dieu ayt son âme[1].

Much of the interest of Brantôme's book is to be found in his numerous digressions, for which he is constantly apologising[2]. Thus in the middle of the account of Montmorency we have a laudatory sketch of Michel de l'Hospital, in that of Tavannes a digression on the order of St Michael, in that of Bellegarde an account of his own treatment by Henry III[3]. The digressions are frequently made occasions for amusing stories, which, like Montaigne's, are distinguished from such as Bouchet and Beroalde de Verville collected, in that they generally illustrate some trait of human character.

Like Montaigne again, Brantôme copies freely and without acknowledgement from books. Whole pages are taken from *Le loyal serviteur*, stories are borrowed from Rabelais, Des Periers, and the *Heptameron*, as well as from most of the writers dealt with in the last chapter. But Brantôme, unlike Montaigne, tries to conceal his thefts by judicious alterations, or by pretending that he heard the story himself, or even that he was a witness of the event related. *J'ai ouy conter* and *J'ai vu* are frequently in his mouth[4]. He was doubtless chiefly influenced in these endeavours to conceal his borrowings by the same form of vanity as Montaigne, the desire to be regarded, not as a man of letters, but as a gentleman who amused himself by putting down his reminiscences on paper. It is for this reason that he tries to give a negligent and conversational air to his style. The result is that he is often ungrammatical and sometimes obscure. Yet his style, at any rate in the eyes of a foreigner, has considerable merit, and chiefly from its power of vivid presentment. For Brantôme, like other Gascons, like Montaigne and Monluc and Henry IV, saw things vividly and can make his readers

[1] *Œuvres*, IV. 59.

[2] See for a defence of his method, V. 337 and 347.

[3] All in V.

[4] See Lalanne, *Brantôme*, p. 353 ff.

see them. He has a store of expressive words and phrases such as *un peu hommasse* (of Mary of Hungary), *arrondis comme potirons* (of stout men), *une vraie pancarte des choses mémorables de la court* (of his aunt), *toujours trottant, traversant et vagabondant le monde.* A noticeable feature of his style is his love of Italian and Spanish words, reflecting in this, as in other features, the prevailing fashion of the Court[1].

Brantôme's keen enjoyment of the world's pageantry was seldom disturbed by inconvenient reflexion. His only quarrel with society was that the ruling powers were blind to his own merits. He thought the duel, even in the treacherous and bloodthirsty fashion in which it was then carried on, an excellent institution, and at the end of his account of Coligny he inserts an elaborate disquisition on the material benefits which the religious wars had conferred on France. All classes had profited, nobles, clergy, magistrates, merchants, artisans.

Et la ville de Périgueux, quoy qui a esté pillée des huguenotz l'espace de cinq à six ans, aujourd'huy on n'y trouve rien à redire qu'elle ne soit aussi riche, voire plus que jamais. Tant d'autres villes en conterois-je ; mais j'en laisse la curiosité à plus entendus que moy. Bref, il faut dire de la France ce que disoit le grand capitaine Prospero Colomne de la duché de Milan, qui ressembloit un' oie bien grasse, que tant plus on la plumoit tant plus la plume luy revenoit. La cause donc en est deue à ceste bonne guerre civile, tant bien invantée et introduicte de ce grand M. l'admiral.

Ce n'est pas tout : les gens d'église, lesquelz cryoient le plus après les huguenotz et leur guerre, y ont gaigné autant que les autres ; tesmoings les trésors et riches relicques qu'ilz ont vendu soubz main, en faisant accroyre que les huguenotz les avoient prises par force, aucuns autres fouillez en terre, qu'ilz avoient cachez ; et donnoient à entendre qu'ilz avoient tant desrobé ; et non tant certes qu'eux-mesmes s'en estoient secrettement accommodez.

. . . . . .

Que dira-l'on d'un tiers estat, qui avec les autres en disoit sa rastellée, et desbagouloit pis que pendre après M. l'admiral et sa guerre ? Y ont-ilz beaucoup perdu ? Non certes, mais beaucoup gaigné et enrichys ; car marchans, artizans, gens de mestier et autres de ce tiers estat, se

[1] *Brantôme est le prince des espagnolisants du xvi^e siècle*, A. Morel-Fatio, *Études sur l'Espagne*, 1re série, p. 28, 1888.

sont si bien accreuz, que ce qui se vendoit paradvant un teston, aujourd'huy se vend l'escu pour le moins[1].

And all this is said in sober earnest, without a suspicion of irony. One might at any rate give Brantôme credit for originality had he not told us at the outset that this was the substance of a conversation which he overheard at Court between two great persons, one a soldier and the other a statesman, and both excellent Catholics. Brantôme was the echo as well as the mirror of the Court. *Dieu ayt son âme!*

Brantôme's glowing panegyric on Margaret of Valois[2] induced that virtuous princess to write her memoirs, partly in order to supplement his account of her, partly to correct a few errors into which he had fallen. It is to Brantôme accordingly that her memoirs are addressed. They were written about the year 1597 in the *château* of Usson in Auvergne, where she had resided, nominally as a prisoner, since 1587. She insists at the outset on their veracity, but it is just their lack of veracity which detracts from their interest. For there runs through them a vein of insincerity, a constant endeavour to pose as a virtuous and religious woman. It is curious how this is reflected in the style. While the more apologetic parts of her narrative shew traces of the various affectations of her age, of classical pedantry, of the abuse of metaphor, of long and involved sentences, on the other hand when she is not thinking of her reputation she writes not only with elegance and distinction—for these qualities never desert her —but with ease, correctness, and simplicity.

The best-known passage in her memoirs is the account of her experiences during the massacre of St Bartholomew. Of greater length and equally well-written is the description of her journey to Spa, one incident of which, the tragic love-affair of one of her waiting-women, M^lle^ de Tournon, is told with a delicate pathos which recalls one of the best inspired tales of the earlier Queen of Navarre. Naturally there is much in Margaret's life that is omitted—self-revelation was not her purpose—but her admiration for Bussy d'Amboise and her

[1] *Œuvres*, IV. 332 ff. [2] 1553—1615.

hatred of Du Guast are made sufficiently plain. The memoirs stop abruptly in 1582, the last record being an account of her behaviour to her husband and his mistress La Fosseuse, an incident which throws a curious light on the relations of this oddly-assorted couple, and which was no doubt written for the purpose of prejudicing her readers in her favour on the question of her divorce. In autobiographies *les absents ont toujours tort.*

Margaret's letters, with the exception of those addressed to one of her lovers, Harlay de Champvallon, which are stilted and affected, are written with the same correctness, ease and elegance as her memoirs. But there is nothing remarkable about them. On the other hand her husband, Henry IV, has deservedly, and without in the least seeking it, the reputation of being the best letter-writer of the period. In an age in which the besetting sin of prose writers was long-windedness and obscurity, he was remarkable for short and simple sentences. No doubt this was partly due to force of circumstance. A man who has to dash off his letters between saddle and supper must say what he has to say in the fewest terms, plainly and to the point. But Henry's rapid and direct way of writing is also a mirror of his character; it reflects his rapidity of movement and thought, and his power of going straight to the heart of things. Moreover, his imagination if of no great depth was easily moved. Hence the frequent use of picturesque words and expressions which give a racy but untranslatable flavour to his more intimate letters. The same lively imagination, united with the suppleness of mind and character which was partly natural to him, but which had been greatly developed by the difficulties of his career, made him at once a consummate judge of other men's characters, and a master in one of the rarest arts of letter-writing, that of varying his tone with his correspondent. Thus to his companions-in-arms he is brusque and soldier-like, at once their comrade and their commander; to his mistresses he is the ardent and devoted lover, with a halo of romance round his head; to Henry III he is the loyal and respectful subject even when he is fighting against him. And to all

alike he writes with a warmth of feeling that must have roused a corresponding glow in their hearts, even if they felt sometimes that behind the Gascon's frank and affectionate *bonhomie* lay a clear perception of his own needs and of the means by which they could best be satisfied. Finally, he has the indispensable quality of a successful letter-writer, that of writing to his friends as if he were talking to them.

His fullest letters are those to the Comtesse de Gramont, *la belle Corisande*, the lady to whom Montaigne dedicated La Boétie's sonnets, and of all Henry's mistresses the most nearly his equal in force of mind and character. It is to her that he wrote the celebrated description of the island of Marans near La Rochelle, which Sainte-Beuve declares to be the pearl of his love-letters. A worthy pendant to it, though in an entirely different strain, is the letter to Madame de la Roche-Guyon (a lady who had declined his offers of undying affection), written on the eve of an expected battle with the Duke of Parma. It is short enough to be quoted in full:

> Ma maistresse, je vous escris ce mot le jour de la veille d'une bataille. L'yssue en est en la main de Dieu, qui en a desjà ordonné ce qui en doibt advenir et ce qu'il congnoist estre expedient pour sa gloire et pour le salut de mon peuple. Si je la perds, vous ne me verrés jamais, car je ne suis pas homme qui fuye ou qui reculle. Bien vous puis-je asseurer que, si j'y meurs, ma penultiesme pensée sera à vous, et ma derniere sera à Dieu, auquel je vous recommande et moy aussy. Ce dernier aoust 1590; de la main de celuy qui baise les vostres et qui est vostre serviteur[1].

His letters to his comrades-in-arms are models of good fellowship and tact. He generally subscribes himself *Votre meilleur maître et plus affectionné ami* or in some similar phrase, and this aptly expresses the relation in which he stood to them. Many of them owed him no allegiance except that due to an elected leader; many were fighting for their own hand far more than for the Huguenot cause; and nearly all were jealous of one another. It was Henry's task at once to coax, to encourage, and to command. A letter

[1] *Lettres missives*, III. 244; Dussieux, p. 157.

to Crillon, or, as he always spelt the name, Grillon, may be taken as a specimen:

Brave Grillon, pendés-vous de n'avoir esté icy près de moi lundy dernier à la plus belle occasion qui se soit jamais veue et qui peut-estre se verra jamais. Croyés que je vous y ay bien désiré. Le cardinal nous vint voir fort furieusement, mais il s'en est retourné fort honteusement. J'espère jeudy prochain estre dans Amiens, où je ne sesjourneray gueres, pour aller entreprendre quelque chose, car j'ay maintenant une des belles armées que l'on sçauroit imaginer. Il n'y manque rien que le brave Grillon, qui sera tousjours le bien venu et veu de moy. A Dieu. Ce xx^e^ septembre [1597], au camp devant Amiens[1].

Or the following to Fervaques, written just before the battle of Ivry:

Fervaques, à cheval, car je veux voir à ce coup-cy de quel poil sont les oysons de Normandie. Venés droict à Alençon[2].

Or this masterpiece of persuasive eloquence:

Mons^r^ de Launay d'Entraigues, Dieu aydant, j'espere que vous estes à l'heure qu'il est restably de la blessure que vous receutes à Coutras, combattant si vaillamment à mon costé; et si ce est, comme je le espere, ne faites faulte (car Dieu aydant, dans peu nous aurons à decoudre, et ainsy grand besoin de vos services) de partir aussitost pour me venir joindre. Sans doubte vous n'aurés manqué, ainsy que vous l'avez annoncé à Mornay, de vendre vos bois de Mezilac et Cuze, et ils auront produit quelques mille pistoles. Si ce est, ne faites faulte de m'en apporter tout ce que vous pourrés; car de ma vie je ne fus en pareille disconvenue, et je ne sçais quand, ni d'où, si jamais, je pourray vous les rendre; mais je vous promets force honneur et gloire: et argent n'est pas pasture pour des gentilshommes comme vous et moy.

La Rochelle, ce xxv^e^ octobre 1588.

Vostre affectionné,

HENRY[3].

Among Henry's followers there is no nobler figure than

[1] *Lettres missives*, IV. 848 (with a facsimile); Dussieux, p. 269.

[2] *Lettres missives*, III. 161; Dussieux, p. 141.

[3] *Lettres missives*, II. 398; Dussieux, p. 106. Henry's sister Catharine, who became Duchesse de Bar, had an easy and graceful epistolary style. A selection from her letters is printed in the *Bibl. de l'École des Chartes*, 4^me^ sér. iii. (1857) 127 ff.; 325 ff.; and a charming letter of condolence to her brother on the death of Gabrielle d'Estrées is given, with a facsimile, in the *Lettres missives*, V. 40.

that of François de la Noue[1]. His *Discours politiques et militaires*, written during his imprisonment in the Spanish fortress of Limburg, near Verviers (1580–1585), though not, except the last, in any sense memoirs, are generally classed under that head. Even in the last *discours*, entitled *Observations sur plusieurs choses advenues aux trois premiers troubles*, though he is dealing with matters more or less within his own experience, he keeps his own personality completely in the background. Some of the *discours* treat of purely moral questions, so that, as has been pointed out, to make the title of the work complete, the word *moraux* should be added. But it is chiefly as a political reformer that La Noue comes before us in his *Discours*. The first is a noble and able statement of the condition of France, remarkable for its impartiality and absence of party-spirit. The same tolerance is shewn in the third, in which he protests against the common practice of designating those of the opposite religion to the speaker as heretics. He himself had become a Protestant in 1558 under the influence of D'Andelot, who in that year had carried on an active propaganda in distant Brittany, La Noue's native province. He had fought at Dreux in the first civil war, had seized Orleans by a bold stroke in the second, and had been taken prisoner both at Jarnac and Moncontour. It was in the third civil war, at the siege of Fontenay, that he lost an arm, the substitute for which gave him his nickname of *Bras-de-Fer*. His comments therefore on the first three wars are made with full knowledge of his subject, and are highly instructive both from the political and the military point of view. Had he shewn less modesty in concealing his own important share in the various operations he would have been read more and honoured less.

The moral discourses, including several which deal more particularly with social questions, throw considerable light on the society of La Noue's day, especially the eighth, which

[1] See Montaigne's estimate of him, *Essais*, II. 17, a passage added in the edition of 1588. He was born in 1531 and died in 1591 from a wound received at the siege of Lamballe.

investigates the causes of the poverty of the French nobility, and finds them in their increasing extravagance, especially in building, furniture, and dress. The twelfth treats of duelling, and may be profitably compared with the views of Montaigne and Tavannes on the one hand, and those of Brantôme on the other. The twenty-third is a sermon against Alchemy, and the twenty-fourth, *Contre ceux qui pensent que la Pieté prive l'homme de tous plaisirs*, is directed against the Epicureans or *Libertins*[1], as La Noue thinks they should be called, "who finding their chief good in pleasure, try to bring the Christian life into contempt." Lastly there is the exceedingly interesting essay, to which reference has already been made in the preceding volume, on the proposition 'That the reading of the Amadis romances is no less harmful to the young than that of Machiavelli to the old[2].' A couple of passages from this will give a sufficient idea of La Noue's style:

Sous le regne du Roy Henri second, ils ont eu leur principale vogue : et croy que si quelqu'vn les eust voulu alors blasmer, on lui eust craché au visage, dautant qu'ils seruoyent de pedagogues, de iouet, et d'entretien à beaucoup de personnes : dont aucunes apres auoir apris à Amadiser de paroles, l'eau leur venoit à la bouche, tant elles desiroyent de taster seulement vn petit morceau des friandises, qui y sont si naïuement et naturellement representees.

. . . . . .

Quand vn gentil-homme auroit toute sa vie leu les liures d'Amadis, il ne seroit bon soldat ne bon gendarme. Car pour estre l'vn et l'autre, il ne faut rien faire de ce qui est là dedans. Ie ne specifieray point autrement ces grans coups, qui fendent vn homme iusques à la ceinture, et coupent vn brassal et vn bras tout net : ces entre-choquemens et cheutes, où lon ne se fait point de mal, et puis qu'on ressaute incontinent à cheual, comme si on estoit deuenu Leopard : ni ces combats continuez l'espace de deux heures acompagnez de sots entreparlemens, ni des vaillantises imaginaires, qui font qu'vn homme en tuë deux cens. Car la chose monstre que ce n'est que pour faire peur aux femmes, et aux petis enfans : et qui voudra

[1] *Libertin* implies a free-liver as well as a free-thinker. In the *libertins de la ville* M. Hauser sees a reference to Montaigne. He is probably right, but I do not feel quite sure about it.

[2] *Discours*, VI.

perdre le temps à lire au long ce qui en est, pourra conoistre si c'est à tort ou à droit, que ie reprouue tous ces braues et magnifiques badinages[1].

This style, without any special charm or brilliancy, has solid merits. It is singularly equal, it is clear, well-balanced, and weighty. Its habitual gravity is occasionally relieved by familiar and expressive phrases, such as *l'eau leur venoit à la bouche, la conscience plus large que la manche d'un cordelier, arguer la despouille d'un gras benefice.* And it is La Noue who invented *Mademoiselle la Picorée, qui depuis est si bien accrue en dignité qu'on l'appelle maintenant Madame. Et si la guerre civile continue encor je ne doute point qu'elle ne deviene Princesse*[2]. Lively touches like these save his style from the reproach which Bossuet brought against Calvin's, that it was *triste.* For La Noue is clearly of the school of Calvin, as well in the logical firmness of his sentences as in the orderly arrangement of his thoughts, remarkable in that age of disorderly writing.

Though his early education had been neglected he had acquired in later life a considerable knowledge of classical literature, though, so far as Greek was concerned, through translations. But his writing is singularly free from classical pedantry. His most frequent references are to Plutarch, whose Lives he re-read in Amyot's translation during his captivity. It is pleasant, too, to find that he was familiar with Rabelais, quoting the opinions of Frère Jean des Entommeures as if he were a historical character[3]. And on occasion he can tell a story in a lively and dramatic fashion, witness that of the poor apprentice who had found the secret of true Alchemy[4].

In strong contrast to the humane and tolerant La Noue stands the ferocious Catholic leader, Monluc, whose *Commentaires* by general consent stand at the head of the Memoirs and other similar works of this period. It may

[1] The text is that of an edition published in 1588 without mention of the place of printing, but probably printed at Geneva.

[2] *Discours*, XXVI.

[3] *Le quel a esté vn des plus braves Moynes moynans de son temps*, VIII.

[4] XXIII.

be objected that a book which treats of nothing but minor military operations is likely to prove monotonous to the general reader, especially if, as in Monluc's case, these are dealt with in a somewhat technical fashion. On the other hand fighting played so important a part in those days, was indeed the only serious occupation of the French nobility, that a book of this sort helps us to understand the age. In any case the *Commentaires* are true memoirs, personal reminiscences of the writer's own actions, the record of which by his own pen he justifies by the example of "the greatest captain who ever lived," Julius Caesar. For Monluc, born near Condom in the heart of Gascony, was as typical a Gascon as the incomparable M. d'Artagnan. Vain, egotistical, quarrelsome, hot-tempered, yet bearing no rancour; brave almost to ostentation, yet when occasion required, prudent and crafty; prompt, resourceful, vigilant, untiring, ever ready for a hasardous enterprise and sparing no pains to secure its success; not a great general, but a born leader—such is the idea we get of Monluc at the close of his Fourth book. But as we read further the portrait assumes a more unpleasant aspect. Monluc was not cruel by nature, he was no fiend to gloat over the suffering of his victims. But he was hard and pitiless to the core, carrying out remorselessly what he conceived to be the only effective method of stamping out Protestantism. It had succeeded in Spain, why not in France? He was no religious fanatic, no more than Charles V, or Catharine de' Medici, or the Cardinal de Guise, but the Huguenots were rebels and must be put down with a high hand. So he gave no quarter, and only made prisoners to hang them. Towards the close of his Memoirs he looks back with satisfaction on his work:

Les autres querelles se pacifient aisément, mais celle de la religion a longue suite, et, encore que les gens de guerre ne soient pas fort religieux, ils prennent party, et estant engaigés ils suivent puis après. Aux termes que je voy les affaires, je ne croy pas que nous soyons au bout; pour le moins ay-je ce contentement en moy-mesme de m'y estre opposé autant que j'ay peu, et fait mon debvoir. Pleust à Dieu que tous ceux qui ont eu les forces en main, n'eussent non plus connivé que moy. Il faut laisser

faire Dieu: après qu'il nous aura prou fouettés, il mettra les verges au feu[1].

But his life would have been fairer and more after the ordinary human pattern had it ended before the outbreak of the Civil Wars. He was then in his sixtieth year and had served with honour in the Italian wars off and on for nearly thirty years. It was mainly owing to his advice and partly to his conduct in the field, if we may trust a Gascon on such points, that the victory of Cérisoles was won by the French (1544), and his account of it is admirable. But his great feat of arms was the defence of Siena against the troops of Cosmo de' Medici and his imperial allies. He had to capitulate in the end (April 1555), but he held out for nearly eight months. The critics said that if he had capitulated sooner he might have made better terms[2], but he was a soldier, not a politician, and when he returned to France the king, Henry II, who was also a soldier, "embraced him with both arms and held his head against his breast almost as long as you would take to say a Pater noster." So he went to his lodgings as contented as if the king had given him a rich present; *car j'ay esté tousjours glorieux: aussi suis-je Gascon.*

His relation of this siege, which occupies the whole of his Third book, is on the whole the most striking part of his Memoirs. The following passage relates how Piero Strozzi, after his defeat at the battle of Marciano and after an unsuccessful attempt to throw himself into the town, was finally brought in by Monluc's nephew:

Sur ces entrefaictes le jour commencea à venir; Serillac se trouve n'ayant perdu que trois ou quatre de sa compaignie qui s'en estoient fuys avec les gens de pied; et croy que de l'autre compaignie n'en demeura pas beaucoup, car il n'y avoit qu'ung lieutenant qui là commandast. Monsieur le mareschal, qui se vist sans ouyr aucung bruit, remonte à cheval assés malaysement, et commensa à recognoistre nostre cavalerie qui avoit faict haltou, et regardoict Serillac s'il le trouveroict parmy les mortz; et comme il le vist venir à luy, je vous laisse à penser quelle joye eurent et l'ung et l'autre: et ainsi s'acheminarent droict à la ville. Or, veux je dire que monsieur le mareschal

[1] Ed. Ruble, III. 513. [2] Brantôme, IV. 52 ff.

fist là une des plus grandz folies que jamais homme de son estat aye faicte, comme je luy ay dict cent fois despuis : car il sçavoict bien que s'il estoict prins, tout le monde ne l'eust sçeu sauver, que le duc de Florence ne l'eust fait mourir honteuzement, pour l'inimitié jurée qu'il luy portoict. Et encores que Serillac feusse mon nepveu, si luy donrray-je ceste louange et reputation avec la véritté, qu'il feust cause du salut de monsieur le mareschal. Je le puis bien escripre, puis que monsieur le mareschal mesme le disoit[1].

I have cited this as a good specimen of Monluc's ordinary style. The first thing that strikes one is its conversational character. It is the style of a man who is relating his experiences to his friends, and this, as we know from the passage of Brantôme quoted above, Monluc was in the habit of doing. *Il le faisoit beau ouyr parler et discourir des armes et de la guerre...car il avoit une fort belle éloquence militaire.* And in fact Monluc, who hated writing or any sort of clerk's work, dictated the whole of his *Commentaires*. At the siege of Rabastens (July 1570), he was horribly disfigured by a musket-wound in the face[2], and as he was now nearly seventy he was relieved of his government of Guyenne, much to his chagrin, which he expressed in a long letter to the King. However, as in the similar case of his friend Brantôme, his wound led to his writing his Memoirs :

Or c'est icy la fin de mon livre et de ma vie : que si Dieu me la continue plus longuement, quelqu'autre escripra le reste, si je me trouve en lieu où je face quelque chose digne de moy, ce que je n'espere pas, me sentant si incommodé que je ne pense meshuy pouvoir jamais plus pourter les armes. J'ay ceste obligation à ceste meschante arquebusade qui m'a percé et froissé le visage, d'avoir esté cause que j'ay dicté ces Commentaires, lesquels, comme je pense, dureront après moy. Je prie ceux qui les liront de ne les prendre point comme escripts de la main d'ung escrivain, mais d'ung vieux soldat, et encore gascon, qui a escript sa vie à la verité, et en guerrier ; tous ceux qui pourteront les armes y prendront exemple, et recognoistront que de Dieu seul procède l'heur et le malheur des hommes. Et pour-ce que nous debvons avoir recours à luy seul, supplions-le nous ayder et conseiller en nos tribulations, car ce monde n'est autre chose, et dont les grands ont aussi bien leur part que les petits : en cela se manifeste sa grandeur, veu qu'il n'y a roy ny prince qui en soit exempt, et qui n'aye ordinairement besoing de luy et de son secours.

[1] Ed. Ruble, II. 3.

[2] See Brantôme's story of *Lou naz de Rabastain*, IV. 36.

Ne desdaignés, vous qui désirés suivre le train des armes, au lieu de lire des Amadis ou Lancellots, d'employer quelqu'heure à me cognoistre dedans ce livre : vous apprendrés à vous cognoistre vous mesmes, et à vous former pour estre soldats et cappitaines, car il faut sçavoir obeir pour sçavoir après bien commander. Cecy n'est pas pour les courtisans ou gens qui ont les mains polies, ny pour ceux qui ayment le repos ; c'est pour ceux qui par le chemin de la vertu, aux despens de leur vie, veulent eterniser leur nom, comme, en despit de l'envie, j'espere que j'auray faict celuy de Montluc[1].

This was the original conclusion of the *Commentaires* when Monluc laid down his pen in 1572, but in 1576 he took it up again to relate how he was made a marshal of France by the new king, Henry III, and how at the age of seventy-four he was present at the siege of Gensac. This was his last fight and the occasion of his last harangue. There was no part of his body except his right arm which had not received a wound in the course of his long career. It was time to hang up his sword. He even thought of ending his days in a priory on the Spanish frontier. The exact date of his death is unknown, but he made a codicil to his will in August, 1577, and he probably died soon afterwards. The *Commentaires* were published with some alteration and suppressions by Florimond de Raemond in 1592.

As might be expected from an old man trusting entirely to his memory and restrained by no considerations of literary form the *Commentaires* are full of digressions and repetitions and tedious relations of unimportant incidents. But they are instinct with life and movement, and the style is remarkable. It is the style of a man who has had little or no intercourse with books, but who has a natural gift for clear and expressive speech. His thoughts shape themselves in language without any effort. Those who hold the view that the language of literature should be widely differentiated from that of speech had better read Monluc, and then reconsider their position.

[1] Ed. Ruble, III. 518, 9.

2. *L'Estoile, Tavannes, Sully.*

We have seen that Monluc, the only one of the five writers hitherto discussed in this chapter who wrote true memoirs—for Margaret of Valois confined herself to certain carefully arranged passages in her life—began his task in the year 1570. In 1575 the diplomatist, Michel de Castelnau, followed in his footsteps, while the memoirs of the parish priest, Claude Haton, date from about the same year. There are indeed earlier writings of the kind, which are included in the various collections of French memoirs, such as the *Commentaires* of François de Rabutin, the first books of which were published in 1555, and the accounts of the sieges of Metz and St Quentin by Salignac and Coligny respectively. But these, like the Du Bellay memoirs, of which mention was made in the first volume, are of the nature of contemporary history rather than true memoirs. It is therefore from about the beginning of the last quarter of the sixteenth century that the fashion of memoir-writing, which has contributed to French literature so many important and delightful works, may be said to date. From that time down to the middle of the seventeenth century it flourished with unabated vigour.

Naturally all the memoirs of our period do not belong to literature. Some are so entirely devoid of charm or individuality that, whatever their importance for the political historian, they can find no place in a history of literature. But there are others which, while they lack the genius for expression which marks the style of the five writers noticed in the first section of this chapter, or exhibit it only at spasmodic intervals, yet succeed in interesting the reader by the talisman of a distinct personality. For provided a writer can stamp his work with the seal of his own individuality, provided he can give it, so to speak, an atmosphere of its own, he has assured for it a place, however modest, on the roll of literature.

Such a place we may certainly grant to the *Mémoires-Journaux* of Pierre de L'Estoile. Grandson of the distinguished jurist of the same name, and son of a president of the Court of *Enquêtes* in the Paris Parliament, he himself purchased a post in the Paris Chancery. But his real business in life was the collection of engravings, medals, and books, and especially of pamphlets and broadsides. He also made a practice of noting down every interesting event, whether trivial or important, and the Journal which he thus kept for thirty-seven years, from 1574 to 1611[1], is of singular importance for the student of the social and political life of his day. If he was too ready to accept unauthorised gossip, he was at least an honest and fair-minded man, with no strong political bias except a sincere hatred of the League. Though he has no pretentions to style, writing, as he said, *mihi non aliis*, he often puts things in a humorous way, so that the book is an amusing one to read in, if not one to read continuously. He can tell a story with spirit, as for instance that of the death of Bussy d'Amboise[2], which, like other passages in his Journal, has furnished Dumas with hints for his Homeric narrative. The cream of the Journal is the portion which covers the period of the League from the death of Henry III to the entry of Henry IV into Paris[3]. Happily both for himself and for us L'Estoile was able during these years of gloom and terror to see the humorous side of things. His Journal is a perpetual illustration of the *Satire Ménippée*. He made it his particular business to attend or get reports of the various sermons which the League preachers thundered forth every Sunday, and they furnish a good deal of amusement. He does not tell us much about himself and his own affairs, and the statement which he makes at the beginning of one of his manuscripts that we shall see him (*comme dit le s^r de Montaigne en ses Essais, parlant de soy*) *tout nud et tel que je suis* is a disappointing one. But the character he gives himself—*mon*

[1] The last entry is on Sept. 27, 1611, a week before his death. He was born in 1546.

[2] I. 321.

[3] Vol. v. and part of vi.

ame libre et toute mienne, accoustumée à se conduire à sa mode, non toutesfois meschante ne maligne, mais trop portée à une vaine curiosité et liberté—is faithfully borne out in his Journal. From this time, however (July 1606), it becomes rather less interesting, being chiefly an account of his purchases of books, or in his own words, *le Magazin de mes curiosités*. But there is an interesting entry on July 1610, in which he tells us that he is a lover and constant reader of Montaigne. He died in the following year, the close of his life having been clouded by ill-health and poverty.

Jean de Saulx, seigneur de Tavannes, is a sixteenth century Saint-Simon[1]. His memoirs are nominally a history of France during the life-time (1509–1573) of his father, Gaspard de Saulx, who distinguished himself at the battle of Renty (1554), was created a marshal (1571), and was one of the four—the only Frenchman among the number—who with Charles IX and his mother formed the fatal council which decided on the massacre of St Bartholomew. The memoirs, for which Jean de Tavannes used his father's papers and therefore called by his father's name, were written to correct for the benefit of his family the view taken by historians of his father's services, but they are interspersed with numerous long digressions consisting partly of his own reminiscences and partly of moral reflexions[2]. Begun in 1601, but written for the most part between 1616 and 1621, they carry us far beyond the limits of our period; but just as Saint-Simon, in spite of his date, belongs to the seventeenth century, so his prototype, Jean de Tavannes, is of the sixteenth. Like Saint-Simon he is a *frondeur* and a pessimist, and like Saint-Simon he is a champion of the privileges and purity of the French nobility. His style too, though without the genius of Saint-Simon's, recalls it both in its disregard of ordinary rule and usage and in its brusque and dogmatic tone. The moral reflexions which he sows so plentifully are

[1] Born 1555, made his will in 1629.

[2] *Ce sujet remarquable m'a porté à des considerations et conceptions que j'ay trouvé à propos d'escrire; et y ay entremeslé aucunesfois quelque chose de moy mesme.* Preface.

often mere truisms, but the whole book is at once a valuable picture of the age and the unconscious portrait of an honest and high-minded man, who on the great question which divided France into two camps was on the side of toleration. *La religion gist en creance qui ne peut estre forcée que par raison, et non par flammes.* His elder brother Guillaume[1] wrote about the same time (between 1620 and 1625) dull memoirs relating to events from 1560 to 1596.

Till quite recently the memoirs of François de Scépeaux, Marshal de Vieilleville[2], purporting to be written by his secretary, Vincent Carloix, held in the eyes of both historians and literary critics a position equal, if not superior, to those of Tavannes. But it has been shewn by the Abbé Marchand that the writer of these memoirs on the one hand attributes to Vieilleville various important acts with which according to trustworthy contemporary writers he had nothing to do, and on the other omits some of his distinctions and is otherwise imperfectly informed as to his career. M. Marchand's almost certain conclusion is that the memoirs, which in other respects betray ignorance of the court and of affairs, are the work, not as they pretend to be of Vincent Carloix, but of some one, probably a chaplain, attached to the household of the Marshal's son-in-law, the Marquis d'Espinay, who composed them about the year 1590, basing his narrative on family traditions and personal reminiscences, and filling in the details with the help of such histories and memoirs as he found in his patron's library[3].

This overthrow of Vieilleville's memoirs as an historical authority should not necessarily discredit them as a literary work. For they are written in an easy and lively if negligent style, and with some power of dramatic presentation. But the knowledge that they are neither genuine fact nor honest fiction decidedly diminishes their interest, while the apparent

[1] 1551—1637.

[2] Vieilleville died on the last day of November, 1571, while Charles IX was on a visit to him at his *château* of Durtal in Anjou. His *bâton* was at once given to Tavannes, already a supernumerary marshal, the appointment being dated on the same day.

[3] Marchand, *Vieilleville*, esp. pp. 11—47.

naïveté of the writing, with its love of old words and expressions, considerably loses its charm when one realises that it is modelled on that of *Le Loyal Serviteur* and that thus in style as well as in matter the whole book is more or less of a *pastiche*[1].

The idea of fathering these memoirs on Vincent Carloix was not a bad one, for it was common in those days for an unlettered soldier or even politician to employ his secretary to write an account of his memorable actions. To this practice we owe the memoirs of Jean Choisnin, the secretary of Jean de Monluc, Bishop of Valence (a younger brother of Blaise), who has left an account of his patron's mission to Poland, and those of François de Boyvin, Baron du Villars, the secretary of the Marshal de Brissac, who wrote a diffuse and tiresome but fairly trustworthy account of that general's campaigns against the imperialist forces in Piedmont from 1550 to 1559. Much better written, in a simple unaffected style, though with the usual tendency to long and cumbrous sentences, are the *Commentaires*, already mentioned, of François de Rabutin, an ancestor of Bussy-Rabutin and of the same family as M^me^ de Sévigné, who had served in the Netherland campaigns of the same period in the company formed by the Duc de Nevers. Reference has also been made to the contemporary accounts of two important events in these campaigns, that of the successful defence of Metz against Charles V, written by Bertrand de Salignac de la Motte-Fénelon, a great-uncle of Fénelon[2], and that of the unsuccessful but heroic defence of St Quentin against overpowering numbers by Coligny, written by Coligny himself[3]. The latter is simply written, without any pretensions to style, and is interesting as the personal record of a great man.

One of the most important authorities for the events which

[1] They were first published in 1757 by the Jesuit father, Henri Griffet. An abridgement had previously been given by the Dominican father, Du Paz, in his *Hist. généalogique de plusieurs maisons illustres de Bretagne*, 1619.

[2] *Le Siège de Metz*, 1552.

[3] First published in 1643 in a volume with the French translation of the Latin life.

led to the wars of religion and for the first two wars is the diplomatist Michel de Castelnau, whose memoirs, written in England between 1575 and 1585, cover the period from 1559 to 1569[1]. But though they are on the whole well-written, and though the writer confines himself to his own experiences, calling his work *Discours des choses que j'ay veues et maniées*, the lack of colour and passion which makes them valuable to the historian renders them uninteresting as literature[2].

The personal note which is absent from Castelnau's memoirs gives interest to those of Jean de Mergy, a Protestant gentleman of Champagne in the service of the Comte de La Rochefoucauld, with whom he was taken prisoner at St Quentin[3]. He fought at Dreux and Montcontour, and was at Paris during the massacre, when his master was murdered. He relates his experiences in a simple, unaffected fashion, writing when he was an old man of seventy-seven. The memoirs are very short and only mention a few events later than 1572.

We have the account of another Protestant's escape from the massacre in M^me^ du Plessis-Mornay's life of her husband. But in spite of the important part that Mornay played in the political and theological arena this narrative of two singularly noble lives is disappointing. It is too staid and unemotional. Even the account of how the writer and her future husband escaped from the massacre has little life in it. Moreover the style, with its long involved sentences, is heavy and often obscure. M^me^ de Mornay had not the pen of a Mrs Hutchinson.

Yet another Protestant, Maximilien de Béthune, Baron de Rosny, Duc de Sully[4], has told the tale of how he was saved on the day of St Bartholomew, being then only a boy of

[1] He succeeded Salignac as ambassador.

[2] The memoirs of Claude Haton of Provins (ed. F. Bourquelot in the *Coll. des Doc. inédits*, 2 vols. 1857) are valuable to the historian of the religious wars as representing the point of view of a provincial priest, and as giving much information for the district in which the writer lived, but neither the style nor the manner of presenting the facts entitles them to be regarded as literature.

[3] Michaud and Poujoulat, IX.; Petitot, XXXIV.; Buchon.

[4] 1560—1641.

twelve. Of all the memoirs noticed in the second part of this chapter his are the most interesting. Yet the form he gave to them might well have proved fatal to their success. Instead of being written, like most memoirs, in the first person, or even in the third, he has made his secretaries, four in number, relate to him by way of reminder his own actions—and his own virtues. As for instance:

> De ce pas vous en allastes voir mademoiselle de Courtenay, envers laquelle vous et vos gentils-hommes fistes si bien valoir ce que c'estoit passé, que cette belle et sage fille vous prit en affection, et peu apres vous l'espousastes : l'amour et gentilesse de laquelle vous retint toute l'année 1584 en vostre nouveau mesnage, où vous commençastes à tesmoigner, comme vous avez desja bien fait auparavant en toute vostre vie, en la conduite de vostre maison, une œconomie, un ordre et un mesnage merveilleux.

Another stumbling-block in the path of the reader is the enormous length of the sentences. I have come across one of five hundred and seventy-six words, and another which fills exactly a whole double-column page in Michaud and Poujoulat's edition, and must contain at least nine hundred words. And these are genuine sentences, the length of which does not depend merely on punctuation. Happily the memoirs are not written entirely in this fashion. At an early stage in his career Sully evidently began to write down records of important events in which he had played a part by the side of his master, and these, with letters and other documents, formed the basis of the first draft which his secretaries made under his directions and superintendence between his retirement in 1611 and the year 1617. Thus the accounts of his most stirring experiences, such as the siege of Cahors or the battles of Coutras and Ivry, have a ring of reality which, in spite of their somewhat grotesque form, impresses them upon the imagination. As Henry IV said, Sully's style *sent son soldat, et son homme d'État*[1]. Moreover his conversations

[1] Quoted by Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries*, VIII. 192. We have an undoubted specimen of Sully's style in c. vi, which the secretaries copied from a paper in his writing.

with Henry IV and various scenes in which either the King or his minister plays a part are given in the form of dialogue, and are admirably done. Sully, like his fellow-Huguenot, D'Aubigné, is an excellent *raconteur*, and as he says himself is fond of introducing a *petit conte pour rire au milieu de tant de choses sérieuses.* One of his best stories is the inimitable conversation between M. de Roquelaure and the Archbishop of Rouen, the King's illegitimate brother, who had some scruples about marrying the King's sister, Catharine, who was a Protestant, to the Duc de Bar[1].

In spite of Sully's egregious vanity he is not the hero of his memoirs; that part is reserved for Henry IV. With such a hero the book could hardly fail to be interesting, but it should be remembered in Sully's favour as a writer that the firm hold which the Béarnais has taken of the imaginations and affections of the French people is in a large measure owing to Sully's presentment of him. Had the portrait been drawn by the hand of a courtly flatterer it would have failed of its effect; but it convinces by its fidelity and its realism[2]. The portrait which Sully has left of himself is a less pleasing one. We see him vain, pompous, arrogant, and rough, jealous of his colleagues, greedy of honours and money, but able, intelligent, abounding in energy and common sense, fearless morally as well as physically, and above all things a loyal servant, loyal to his King, loyal to France.

He was no doubt a disagreeable and difficult colleague, but during those years of misrule which intervened between the death of Henry IV and the accession of Richelieu to power (1624) it was a grave misfortune for France that she should have been deprived, except on rare occasions, of Sully's

[1] Petitot, III. 269 ff.; Michaud and Poujoulat, XVI. 306 ff.

[2] As a supplement to Sully's memoirs should be read those of Claude Groulard, first president of the Parliament of Rouen from 1585, a scholar who had a notable library of Greek classics, and who was a thoroughly honest and high-minded man. His account of his various visits to the Court and of his interviews with Henry IV help one to realise the extraordinary faculty which that monarch had of making himself agreeable to people of every sort and condition. Groulard was about the same age as the King and died two and a half years before him. His memoirs occupy about half the 49th volume of Petitot's collection.

counsels[1]. But though he survived his master for thirty-one years he lived chiefly in retirement at one of his numerous *châteaux*, ordering his household with a pomp and magnificence which would not have discredited Louis XIV[2]. He spent much of his time in editing his memoirs with the help of his four secretaries, but it was not till the year 1638 that the first instalment, in two volumes, was issued from his private press at the *château* of Sully. The third and fourth volumes were published at Paris in 1662, twenty-one years after his death, under the supervision of Le Laboureur. In 1745 the Abbé de l'Écluse des Loges brought out an edition, arranged and expurgated for the use of eighteenth century readers and good Catholics. It is an agreeable book and has the advantage of being written in the first person, but it is not Sully's memoirs[3].

Though Sully's memoirs were not published even in part till long after the close of our period, like those of Tavannes they belong emphatically to the sixteenth century. This is equally the case with the admirable *Vie à ses enfants* of Agrippa d'Aubigné, which he did not begin to write till the year 1623, four years after his fellow-Protestant, Henri, Duc de Rohan, had begun the reminiscences which may be said to inaugurate the series of seventeenth-century memoirs. But I shall reserve the consideration of D'Aubigné's book for a later chapter devoted to the whole work of that remarkable man.

[1] In January, 1611, he resigned the ministry of finance and the government of the Bastille, but retained the superintendence of the artillery, fortifications, and roads, and the government of Poitou and La Rochelle.

[2] See *Supplement aux mémoires de Sully* at the end of the Abbé de l'Écluse's edition. Sully's surgeon told his son that on one occasion he had eighty patients among the servants at Villebon, Sully's favourite residence at the close of his life, without noticing anything amiss with the service.

[3] 3 vols. London (Paris), 1745; 8 vols. *ib.* 1747.

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TO BE CONSULTED.

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CHAPTER XXIV

HISTORY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to draw a hard and fast line between memoirs and contemporary history, and to frame a concise definition of the one which should completely exclude the other. As a rule, no doubt, the writer of memoirs confines himself to a record of events in which he has personally taken part, whether as actor or as spectator; but if he happen to be a great statesman or a great captain his record becomes, like that of Julius Caesar, the most valuable of contemporary histories. Moreover the rule is no absolute one. Saint-Simon, for instance, the prince of memoir-writers, by no means confines himself to that Court life which lay within his own experience, but introduces accounts of campaigns and political events in which he played no part. Generally speaking, however, it may be said that the personal element is the making of memoirs. But must we hold with the modern historian that it is the marring of history? Can history, which deals with men and human actions, entirely exclude the personal element? And if it cannot, is it "a science, no less and no more"? At any rate, whatever it may become in the future, it has not been so in the past. Even if the historian has been able to suppress his own personality his work has reflected the thought and passions of the age in which he wrote. It is this indeed which, quite apart from all questions of style, justifies us in treating history as a branch of literature.

For it resembles literature at any rate in being a document for the age in which it was written[1].

This is especially the case with the contemporary histories written in France during the stormy period of her Religious Wars. The writers may use their best endeavours to be not only truthful but impartial, but they cannot escape from the bias of their religion, and it is just this bias which gives their work an abiding interest and value. The Protestant bias, for instance, is well represented in the narratives of Pierre de la Place, President of the *Cour des Aides*, who perished in the massacre of St Bartholomew, and of Louis Regnier de la Planche, a follower of the house of Montmorency. La Place's work, which deals with the period from the death of Henry II (July 1559) to the end of 1561, was published in 1565; that of La Planche, which is confined to the short reign of Francis II (July 1559 to December 1560), appeared in 1576. La Place's work is more impartial, more concise, more accurate, in a word superior from the historical point of view. But La Planche's book is better reading. His lively and forcible style, his strong Protestant bias, his hatred of the Guises, his readiness to accept mere rumour, and his love of detail, are all qualities which make for literature. Moreover he is generally well informed, he has considerable political insight, and his conception of the functions of a historian is just and enlightened:

> Car à vray dire, le fruict de l'histoire ne gist pas au simple recit de ce qui s'est dit ou fait: mais à bien savoir considerer les causes et les issues de ce qui y est recité pour en faire son proufit, apprenant par les fautes d'autruy, et se façonnant par l'exemple des choses bien vertueusement entreprinses et executées, en quoi celuy qui escrit l'histoire nous peut principalement aider, pourveu que la raison jointe à la verité gouverne son entendement vuide de toute passion[2].

[1] The same idea, better expressed, will be found in Professor Bury's *Inaugural Lecture* (Cambridge, 1903). He says that the histories of each age "belong to the documents which mirror the form and features of their age," and he gives as instances Tacitus's *Annals* and Treitschke's *History of Germany*.

[2] Ed. Mennechet, I. xv. The *Advertissement au lecteur*, from which the above passage is taken, was doubtless written by La Planche himself. Prof. Baird doubts his authorship of the whole work (*History of the Huguenots*, I. 410, note), but his argument seems to me unsound.

On the other hand the absence of any such philosophical conception of history forbids us to assign a higher rank than that of a chronicle to the *Chronologie novenaire* (1589—1597)[1] and the *Chronologie septenaire* (1598—1604)[2] of Pierre Victor Palma Cayet, and though his patient collection of facts and his general trustworthiness make him a valuable source of information he has no charm of style to atone for his other defects.

The first attempt in France to extend the philosophical treatment of contemporary history beyond her own borders was made by another Protestant, Henri Lancelot Voisin de La Popelinière, a gentleman of Guyenne, who in 1575 played an important part in the recapture from the Catholics of the Ile de Ré, opposite to La Rochelle. His work, which appeared first in 1571 and then in a complete form in 1581, comprises the history of events in France and the neighbouring countries from 1550 to 1577. His somewhat pretentious preface shews that he had a high conception of the duties of a historian, and certainly he spared neither pains nor money in the execution of his task[3]. But unfortunately his language is neither picturesque nor clear, nor, in spite of D'Aubigné's praise, particularly correct[4]. Moreover the pecuniary help which he received from Catharine de' Medici made it impossible for him to be perfectly truthful in matters which concerned the royal family. One would not, for instance, suppose from his account of the massacre that either Catharine or Charles IX was in any way responsible for it[5]. He died in 1608 in great poverty[6], having lived to see the first instalment of a new history of the period which he had treated.

[1] 3 vols. 1608. [2] 1606.

[3] D'Aubigné says he spent the whole of his patrimony on it. (Preface to *Histoire Universelle.*)

[4] *Son langage bien françois qui sent ensemble l'homme de lettres et l'homme de guerre.* (*ibid.*)

[5] It is characteristic of the views of his age with regard to literary property that though he mentions in his preface his indebtedness to Belleforest and the *Histoire ecclésiastique* he says nothing about La Place, whose work he has incorporated almost bodily and with very few additions.

[6] *Mourust d'une maladie assez ordinaire aux hommes de lettres et vertueux comme il estoit, à scavoir: de misère et de nécessité.* P. de l'Estoile, *Journal*, IX. 189.

The author, Jacques Auguste de Thou, was the son of Christophe de Thou, first president of the Paris Parliament, and was himself first a councillor and then a *président à mortier* of the same Parliament. Born in 1553 he was still quite young when his friend Pierre Pithou inspired him with the idea of writing a history of his own times, and before long he set to work to collect materials and otherwise prepare himself, especially by travel, for his great task. In 1593 he began the actual writing, and the first part, consisting of eighteen books and treating of events from 1546 to 1560, was published in 1604[1]. It was his intention to carry the work down to the death of Henry IV, but his own death, which took place in 1617, prevented the completion of his design. The fifth and last part, published in 1620, stops at the year 1607.

The fact that De Thou wrote in Latin is noteworthy. It shews that in spite of the great progress which French prose had made during the sixteenth century, in spite of Rabelais and Calvin and Amyot and Montaigne, it was not yet regarded as a fitting language for a work of learning. Yet from Villehardouin downwards works of a historical character had been written in French, and, as we have seen, it was a historian, Claude de Seyssel, who at the very beginning of the sixteenth century had urged the necessity of providing instruction for those who were ignorant of Latin, and who in the prosecution of his design had spent many years of his life in the translation of Greek historians[2]. Doubtless also De Thou had in view the satisfaction of submitting the result of his labours to a competent court, and preferred the applause of learned Europe to that of unlearned France. If so he had his reward. His work was received with respect and admiration by the whole learned world, and at once achieved an European reputation which lasted for nearly two centuries. The only exception to the general chorus of approval was

[1] See a Latin letter (printed in Buckley's edition and translated in Collinson's Life) written by De Thou to President Jeannin in 1611, in which he gives an account of the origin and growth of his work. The account in his Memoirs is materially the same.

[2] See I. 35, 36.

the Congregation of the Index, which after the appearance of the fourth part formally condemned the work[1]. Their action was an honourable testimony to De Thou's honesty and impartiality, but it caused him much trouble and annoyance, for it had been his especial care to write his book in a conciliatory spirit[2]. Indeed his endeavour to avoid giving offence either to Catholic or Protestant, or in any way to endanger the peace created by the Edict of Nantes, has caused modern critics to accuse him of timidity.

In writing in Latin he missed a great opportunity. Had he written in French, though modern criticism would still have found his work inadequate as a scientific history, he might at any rate have enriched French literature, as his contemporary, Mariana, enriched Spanish[3], with an enduring monument. Time has avenged the French language. De Thou's choice of Latin has not only deprived him of an honourable place on the roll of French men of letters, but has injured his reputation as a historian. The annalistic arrangement of events, the absence of dates and the rhetorical language which he adopted in imitation of Livy, are fatal to the scientific method which the modern view of history demands. On the other hand, his successor and admiring rival, Agrippa d'Aubigné, writing in French, at least produced a considerable literary work. Even from the historical point of view it is a question whether the contemporary atmosphere which his narrative breathes does not compensate for the greater accuracy of De Thou's. But I must leave the *Histoire Universelle* for a later chapter, in which I shall treat of D'Aubigné's multifarious work as a whole.

The humanistic spirit manifested itself also in the field of non-contemporary history. I have already mentioned that the first attempt to write a history of France after classical models was that of the Italian Paolo Emilio, and that his

[1] See A. de Ruble's edition of D'Aubigné's *Histoire universelle*, I. 376 ff.; F. H. Reusch, *Der Index der verbotenen Bücher*, II. 192 ff. Bonn, 1885.

[2] For the eirenical character of his history see A. Rébelliau, *Bossuet, historien de Protestantisme*, 268 n.[1], 1891.

[3] Mariana's History of Spain (down to 1516) was published in Latin in 1592, and in Spanish, translated and revised by the author himself, in 1601.

work, which was written in Latin, appeared in a French translation in 1556[1]. Meanwhile the *Grandes chroniques* of Gaguin and Gilles retained a certain popularity and found continuators in Denis Sauvage (1553), François de Belleforest (1573), Gabriel Chappuis (1585), and Jean Savaron (1621).

Three years after the appearance of Belleforest's work Bernard de Girard, seigneur du Haillan[2], a gentleman of Bordeaux and a converted Protestant, produced the first modern French history. He had been encouraged in his task by Charles IX, who in 1571 appointed him *historiographe de France* and commissioned him to write a complete history of his predecessors. Du Haillan in his preface takes considerable credit to himself for the labour he had spent on his work and for the superiority of his treatment to that of his contemporary, Belleforest. But he uses the same material, that of the *Grandes chroniques*, with little or no attempt at independent research, and his rhetorical additions are not only modelled on those of Paolo Emilio but are often translated from him. The style, however, and form of his work made it immediately popular and definitely brought French history into the domain of literature[3].

A far larger measure of the true historical spirit was possessed by Jean du Tillet and Nicolas Vignier, who, like Claude Fauchet, produced historical works within three years of Du Haillan's. But these, as well as the *Franco-Gallia* of the celebrated jurist, François Hotman, were written, not for the general public, but for the select circle of the learned. In spite of their labours, and in spite of the publication of texts relating to the early history of France by Pierre Pithou, Jacques Bongars, Jacques Simon, André Duchesne, and André de Valois, French history continued to be a department of rhetoric until the beginning of the third decade of the nineteenth century.

[1] See I. 239.

[2] B. circ. 1536, d. 1610.

[3] The Protestant, Jean de Serres, author of Latin commentaries on the Religious Wars, claims for his *Inventaire général de l'histoire de France* (1597) that it is based on original authorities. The style is clear and fairly graphic, but jerky. Both matter and style are severely criticised by Lelong, *Bib. Hist.* III. xcv.

In the sixteenth century it was rather in the contiguous domain of political science than in that of pure history that the historical spirit bore solid fruit. Jean Bodin, the author of the first modern systematic treatise on political science, was born at Angers in 1530, and after studying law at Toulouse was for some time a professor at that University. In 1561 he came to Paris to practise as an advocate, but after a short experience gave up the bar for the more congenial pursuit of learning. In 1566 he published his *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem*, which shews wide reading and an enlightened conception of the function of an historian. The bent of his mind is revealed by the remark that the chief utility of history is to serve as a guide to politics. Ten years later (1576) he was appointed King's advocate at Laon, which henceforth became his home, and at the close of the same year he was chosen to represent the Vermandois as one of the deputies for the Third Estate at the Estates of Blois. He wrote an account of the proceedings, in which he played a courageous and important part. A few months before this his great work, *Six livres de la République*, had made its appearance[1]. It achieved an immediate success. A fresh authorised edition was published every succeeding year down to 1580, besides various pirated ones from the presses of Lyons and Geneva and Lausanne. When Bodin went to England in the train of the Duc d'Alençon in 1579, he found a Cambridge professor lecturing on a Latin translation of his work. It was so bad that he made a new one himself. This was published in 1586, and owing to the amount of revision which it received is the one generally cited by writers on political science.

Bodin, says Sir William Hamilton, stands out with Aristotle and Montesquieu as one of "the great political triumvirate[2]." But this is an exaggerated or, at any rate, a misleading estimate. Aristotle and Montesquieu are great classics; Bodin is not; and that not so much from his want of form and style, for the same may be said of the *Politics* in

[1] The privilege is dated Aug. 12, 1576.

[2] *Discussions*, p. 529.

the shape it has come down to us, as from the absence in his writings of those great thoughts, simple in statement but profound and universal in application, which have made Aristotle and Montesquieu great educators of mankind. Bodin's most important contribution to political science, the doctrine of Sovereignty, however serviceable to the political student, cannot be said to concern the world at large. Thus, not being a classic, he is practically unknown, except to students. Even professed political thinkers like Austin and Maine attribute the doctrine of Sovereignty to Hobbes, and never mention Bodin, from whom Hobbes certainly borrowed it.

But Bodin, without being an Aristotle or a Montesquieu, has great merits—vast learning, an enlightened mind (in spite of his belief in witchcraft[1]), bold independence of thought, and sound judgment. He naturally took Aristotle as his model, but he shews remarkable independence of thought, often following the same lines only to differ from and correct his predecessor's conclusions. For instance, on the question of slavery, to which the conquest of Peru by the Spaniards had given special interest[2], he is very far from accepting Aristotle's declaration that some men are slaves by nature, but denounces the whole practice with great eloquence. He gives telling instances of the cruelty which it engenders, and of its danger to the stability of states[3].

Another well-known chapter is that in which he discusses the effect of climate and situation on national character and government[4]. Though the germ of this inquiry is to be found in Aristotle and other Greek writers, Bodin was the first to work it out in detail. Montesquieu's treatment is on narrower lines and shews considerable differences.

It is not till near the close of his work that Bodin addresses himself to the question which is the best form of government, and after a fair show of discussion decides in favour of royal or lawful monarchy[5]. This he distinguishes alike from

[1] His *Démonomanie des Sorciers* was published in 1581.

[2] La Gasca, the pacificator of Peru, who abolished slavery there in its more aggravated form, had died as recently as 1567.

[3] I. c. v. [4] V. c. i. [5] VI. c. iv.

despotism (*monarchie seigneuriale*) and from tyranny as the form in which the subjects obey the laws of the monarch, and the monarch obeys the laws of nature[1]. He further goes on to express his preference for the hereditary form of succession through males only[2]. Leaving out of question the futility of pronouncing in favour of any form of government as the absolute best, and the vagueness of Bodin's distinction between the different forms of monarchy, it may be noticed that in spite of his attempt to discuss the question fairly he has approached it with a firm conviction in favour of the government which had prevailed in France for nearly six centuries. However unphilosophical this may be, it is for the general reader one of the interesting features of his book. For Bodin was the philosophical representative of that important central party in France of which Michel de l'Hospital was the founder, and Montaigne and De Thou were among the chief ornaments, of that party which had for its two leading principles loyalty to the crown and religious tolerance, and which its opponents nicknamed the *Politiques* because its members were said to prefer the salvation of their country to that of their souls. It was patriotic feeling which had led Bodin to write his book. "Now that the force of the storm has struck the vessel of our State with such violence that even the master and the pilots are weary of their continual labour, it must needs be that the passengers lend a hand[3]." It was to further this object that, with a truer instinct than De Thou, he wrote it in French, thus addressing himself not merely to a limited class of learned men but to all Frenchmen "who desire to see this kingdom restored to its former splendour, and once more flourishing in arms and government."

Bodin's defence of monarchy was no doubt intended to be a corrective of the anti-monarchical ideas of the Protestants, and especially of the *Franco-Gallia*, which was published some time before he wrote his concluding book. His attitude towards religion is equally characteristic of the *politique* party,

[1] II. c. ii. [2] VI. c. v.

[3] Preface addressed to Guy du Faur de Pibrac.

and closely resembles that of Montaigne. A prince, he says, should not allow the established religion of his state to be made the subject of controversy, but if religious factions spring up he must not resort to force to put them down. For the more you do violence to the inclination of men, the more obstinate they become. Bodin instances in favour of this policy of toleration the treatment of the Arians by the Emperor Theodosius, the practice of the Sultan in his own day, and the saying of Theodoric the Goth that we cannot impose a religion, because no one can be compelled to believe against his will[1]. At the Estates of Blois Bodin put these ideas into action, and it was largely owing to his influence and energy that a petition was presented to the King by the Third Estate in favour of peace and toleration. In private he held views even more tolerant, for when he died at Laon in 1596 he left behind him an unpublished Latin treatise entitled *Colloquium Heptaplomeres*[2], in which the subject of religion is discussed by a Roman Catholic, a Lutheran, a Calvinist, a Mahommedan, a Jew, a Pagan, and a believer in Natural Religion with such complete impartiality that Bodin was variously declared by his readers to be a Protestant, a Jew, and a Deist. Whatever his real belief was he lived and died in communion with the Catholic Church.

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[1] *Religionem imperare non possumus, quia nemo cogitur ut credat invitus*, IV. c. vii.

[2] Edited partly in German and partly in Latin by G. E. Guhrauer, Berlin 1841, and in Latin by L. Noack, Schwerin 1857.

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CHAPTER XXV

THE SATIRE MÉNIPPÉE

THE French Wars of Religion, besides inspiring and colouring grave philosophical treatises like Bodin's *Six livres de la République*, gave rise to an enormous mass of pamphlet literature. Varying in form and character according to the idiosyncrasy of the writer, it is sometimes oratorical, sometimes narrative, sometimes philosophical, and often satirical. The great majority of the pieces, written as they were to meet the controversy of the hour, have only an historical interest, but the *Satire Ménippée* has achieved a permanent place in French literature, and there are others which call for a passing notice, if only as manifestations of the growing strength of French prose.

The first in point of date is the *Epistre envoiée au Tigre de la France*, or as it was called for short the *Tigre*. It appeared in 1560 and was attributed on fairly conclusive evidence to the jurist François Hotman. Modelled on Cicero's Catiline orations it reads like a succession of pistol-shots fired point-blank at the object of its attack, the Cardinal of Lorraine. Rarely before had the French language been used with such nervous and concise energy as in this tiny pamphlet of ten pages[1].

The next notable attack on the Cardinal, commonly known as *Le Livre des Marchands*[2], is very different in

[1] See for a full account of the pamphlet H. M. Baird, *History of the Huguenots*, I. 445 ff.

[2] See the bibliography at the end of the chapter for the proper title.

character to the *Tigre*. It is in the form of a conversation held between the writer (who is undoubtedly Regnier de la Planche[1]) and sundry Paris shop-keepers just after the Cardinal of Lorraine had been stopped by order of François de Montmorency from entering Paris with an armed escort on January 8, 1565. The pamphlet is at once an exceedingly skilful and damaging attack on the Guises and a plea for moderation and tolerance, for that policy which Michel de l'Hospital as Chancellor was vainly endeavouring to carry out. The style is strongly Latinised, but is distinguished by admirable management of both clause and sentence, at that date a rare quality in French prose, and by a lively and vigorous use of metaphor.

After the massacre of St Bartholomew a change comes over the character of the pamphlets. They are all more or less inspired by the massacre, and the chief object of attack is no longer the Cardinal of Lorraine but Catharine de' Medici. The only one however that possesses any literary interest is the anonymous *Discours merveilleux de la vie et actions et deportemens de Catherine de Medicis*, or the *Vie Sainte Catherine*, as it was popularly called[2], which was first published in the autumn of 1574, though the earliest known edition is of 1575. It became immediately popular; several editions, as well as a Latin and an English translation, appeared in 1575, and a revised edition in the following year. It is of course grossly unfair to Catharine, but it is well-arranged and well-written, clear and logical, though without any marked individuality of style. Who was the author? The attribution to the Protestant Jean de Serres may at once be dismissed, for he aspired to be a grave and impartial historian and he was in favour of a conciliatory policy. But a greater name has been associated with the pamphlet, that of Henri Estienne. His authorship however has been absolutely disproved by Mark Pattison, who points out, first that he expressly denied it adding that he was in Hungary at the

[1] See *Reveille-matin*, 1574, dialogue i. p. 104.

[2] The original title seems to have been *Deportemens de Catherine de Medicis*. See P. de l'Estoile, *Mémoires iournaux*, I. 27.

time, secondly that he had not the intimate knowledge of French politics which the pamphlet displays, and thirdly that the style is quite unlike his[1]. The style, indeed, though of considerable merit, is only at rare intervals enlivened by touches of the racy picturesqueness which is habitual to Henri Estienne.

The pamphlets inspired by the massacre were by no means all personal attacks on the Queen-mother. Several were chiefly concerned with the discussion of the grave political question whether it is lawful to resist an unjust magistrate, or in other words whether revolution is ever justifiable. This was the main object of inquiry in the *Franco-Gallia* of François Hotman, published in 1573, and in the *Vindiciae contra tyrannos*, written almost certainly in 1574 (and almost as certainly by Philippe Du Plessis-Mornay), though not published till 1579[2]. But these two famous treatises being written in Latin need only a bare mention in these pages.

The death of the Duc d'Alençon in 1584 and the consequent devolution of the succession on the Protestant King of Navarre gave a new turn to the political wheel. The League was revived with a more effective organisation, of which Paris was the centre, and one of its principles was declared to be

[1] *Essays*, I. 120 ff. Estienne's denial will be found in the preface to the *Precellence du langage françois*, 1579. He was at Geneva on May 16 (letters to Crato nº. xiii.), and soon afterwards went to Austria and Hungary. For a further discussion of the authorship of the *Discours merveilleux* see Appendix E.

[2] *Vindiciae contra tyrannos, sive de Principis in Populum Populique in Principem legitima potestate*, Stephano Junio Bruto Celta autore, Edinburgi [Basle, printed by Thomas Guerin], 1579. Since the time of Bayle the authorship of the *Vindiciae* has usually been attributed to Hubert Languet, the friend and correspondent of Sir Philip Sidney. But Max Lossen in the *Sitzungsberichte der königlichen bayerischen Academie der Wissenschaften zu München* (*philos.-philol. und hist. Classe*), 1887, pp. 215, has made out what seems to me an unanswerable case for Du Plessis-Mornay. Bayle has nothing definite to set against Mme de Mornay's express statement that her husband wrote a book in Latin in 1574, entitled *De la puissance legitime du prince*, which is the exact title of the translation made by François Estienne and published in 1581 (*Mémoires*, I. 81). Further confirmation of this view has been found by A. Waddington in a passage from the *Mémoires* of Conrart (*Rev. hist.* LI. 65 ff., 1893). See E. Armstrong in the *English Hist. Review*, IV. 13 ff., for an excellent analysis of both the *Franco-Gallia* and the *Vindiciae*.

that no one but a Catholic should succeed to the throne of France.

The same arguments which had been used by the Protestants to justify rebellion against a Catholic king were now turned to account by the pamphleteers of the League to justify the exclusion from the throne of a Protestant prince. Montaigne did not fail to note this in a passage which he added to the Apology for Raimond Sebonde in the second edition of his *Essays*. *Cette proposition si solenne: S'il est permis au subject de se rebeller et armer contre son Prince pour la defense de la religion: souvienne vous en quelles bouches cette année passée l'affirmation d'icelle estoit l'arc-boutant d'un parti: la negative, de quel autre parti c'estoit l'arc-boutant. Et oyez à present de quel quartier vient la voix et instruction de l'une et l'autre.*

The chief pamphleteer on the side of the League was Louis Dorleans, a Paris lawyer, while the legitimist view was represented by Pierre de Belloy, advocate-general of the Parliament of Toulouse and a Catholic, whose best known production is the *Apologie Catholique*. He has a vigorous and lively style united to considerable learning and controversial acumen. His opponent, Louis Dorleans, the author of the *Catholique anglois*, is also a good writer, when he is not carried away by violence. Another good writer on the royalist side was the Huguenot Michel Hurault, seigneur du Fay, a grandson of Michel de l'Hospital, and secretary to the King of Navarre. His two *Discours sur l'estat présent de la France* are temperate and well-reasoned reviews of the situation. The first appeared towards the close of 1588, and was read by Guise while he was in attendance on the King at vespers forty hours before his assassination. The second was provoked by the bull of Gregory XIV (March 1, 1591), which declared Henry IV excommunicate.

In 1593 these two *Discours* were reprinted with two others entitled the *Anti-Espagnol* and *La Fleur de Lys*, both written by Antoine Arnaud, a Paris lawyer who soon afterwards became famous by his speech against the Jesuits[1]. The *Anti-Espagnol*,

[1] See D'Aubigné, *Hist. Universelle* liv. XIII. c. xxiii. for the effect of these pamphlets.

which had appeared in 1590, is a good specimen of combative prose declamation, expressed in well-balanced, musical periods. *La Fleur de Lys*, first published at the beginning of 1593, though inferior to its companion from a literary point of view, is even more effective as a pamphlet. One of the chief marks for the writer's invective is the 'old tyrant of Spain.' For by this time it had become perfectly clear that there were only two alternatives before the French people, acceptance of Henry IV or submission to Spain. In the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, published early in December 1593, a Paris leaguer expressed his choice without any circumlocution. "I would rather be the subject of a foreigner who is a Catholic than of a Frenchman who is a heretic[1]." Yet this was more than four months after the King had taken *le saut périlleux* and had returned to the Catholic fold.

There was however one party at Paris which had not thrown aside the national qualities of good sense and moderation. This was the party of the *Politiques*. During the terrorism of the League they had shewn some timidity, but after Mayenne's summary chastisement of the Sixteen (December 1591) for their murder of President Brisson they began to take courage and to hold meetings at the house of their leader, the Sieur Daubray, with a view to a more regular organisation.

Among the members of this party was a councillor of Parliament, named Jacques Gillot, who lived on the *Quai des Orfèvres*, a few steps from the Sainte Chapelle of which he was a canon. He was a man of considerable learning, the friend and correspondent of Scaliger and other scholars, and the possessor of a fine library. Easy circumstances enabled him to entertain his friends, who consoled themselves at his house by freedom and gaiety of conversation for the terrorism and gloom which prevailed without. Among them were Pierre Le Roy, Pierre Pithou, Florent Chrestien, Nicolas Rapin, and Jean Passerat, all men between fifty and sixty

[1] To understand this dialogue in its true light as the apology of the League it should be read in the original edition of 1593. The revised edition of 1594 was, I feel sure, printed by the royalist party.

years of age, and for the most part scholars of considerable distinction. Rapin and Passerat we know already as poets[1]. Of Le Roy nothing is known save that he was a canon of Rouen and almoner to the Cardinal of Bourbon, and that De Thou describes him as *vir bonus et a factione summè alienus*. Florent Chrestien had been tutor to Henry IV, being at that time a Protestant. He was now a Catholic. A pupil of Henri Estienne, his reputation as a Greek scholar was considerable, his favourite author being Aristophanes, three of whose plays he had translated into Latin verse with a commentary. We have seen that Passerat had made a special study of Plautus and Rabelais, and that Rapin had translated Horace. Thus the studies of these scholars had been no bad preparation for the writing of comedy. Pierre Pithou[2] like Chrestien had been brought up as a Protestant, narrowly escaping death in the massacre of St Bartholomew, but in the following year he became a Catholic. Of all the band he was the man of the most solid learning. He had a fine library which included a large collection of manuscripts. From these he edited various important texts including an *editio princeps* of Phaedrus[3], the Edict of Theodoric (also an *editio princeps*), the *Lex Visigothorum*, and several mediæval historical works. His most important original treatise was *Les libertés de l'Église gallicane*[4].

Such were the men who jointly produced the *Satire Ménippée*. But in the form in which it first appeared in the summer of 1593[5], while the Estates of which it is a burlesque account were still sitting, it was the work of a single individual, Pierre Le Roy. This primitive form is probably

[1] For Rapin see *ante*, p. 58, and for Passerat, *ante*, p. 54.

[2] B. at Troyes, 1539, d. 1596.

[3] Published at Autun in 1596, the year of Pithou's death.

[4] See *Vie de Pierre Pithou* [by T. Grosley], 2 vols. 1756; also a letter on his death from De Thou to Casaubon (printed in De Thou's Memoirs) and De Thou's eloquent testimony in his history (bk CXVII. c. ix) to the merits of his friend, *amico arcta mecum necessitudine coniuncto*.

[5] The beginning of D'Aubray's speech in the primitive text, *Il ne failloit ja que nos Prescheurs nous preschassent tant qu'il nous failloit debourber*, is an allusion to Boucher's sermon on May 12, 1593 (L'Estoile, *Journal*, VI. 7).

represented by a manuscript of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*[1], which contains besides what may be called the setting a brief sketch of all the speeches. It is possible that part of this may have been printed in 1593, but it was chiefly circulated in manuscript under the title of *L'Abbregé et L'Ame des Estatz*[2]. It was not till the close of April 1594 that the satire was printed at Tours in a greatly enlarged form under the title of *La Vertu du Catholicon d'Espagne: avec un Abregé de la tenue des Estats de Paris*[3]. The first edition of this work consisted of only seven or eight hundred copies, and the demand was so great that the printer, who had returned to Paris with his press, had to print off four fresh editions in three weeks. In the sixth edition the title was changed to *Satyre Ménippée de la Vertu du Catholicon*, etc. and this title was afterwards retained[4].

The first few pages of the satire, which form a sort of introduction entitled *La vertu du Catholicon*, and which represent two charlatans, one a Spaniard (the Cardinal of Plaisance)[5] and the other a Lorrainer (the Cardinal de Pellevé), selling a wonderful drug called the *catholicon*, have no artistic connexion with the rest. But the three short pieces which follow, *Procession de la Ligue*, *Les Pieces de tapisserie dont la salle des Estats fut tendue*, and *De l'ordre tenu pour les séances*, form an admirable *mise en scène* for the second part, and help to make the *Ménippée*, what it has been justly called,

[1] N°. 4001 (*fonds Béthune*).

[2] Ed. Read, p. 11 (*Deuxieme advis de l'imprimeur*). *Par les meilleures maisons trottoit le* Catholicon (D'Aubigné, *Hist. Univ.* IX. c. i).

[3] *Je ne l'avois peu achever qu'au temps qu'il fallut plier bagage pour s'en venir en ceste ville après que les Parisiens furent retournez à leur bon sens et reduicts en l'obeissance du Roy* (ed. Read, p. 6). The latest event to which there is an allusion in the *Ménippée* is the murder of Saint-Paul by the Duc de Guise on April 25, 1594. It must have been completed in its enlarged form before the King's abjuration on July 25, 1594, for this is referred to throughout as a possible and not as an accomplished event. For a discussion of the relations of the primitive and the enlarged versions to each other see Appendix F.

[4] The title *Satyre Ménippée* is borrowed from the *Saturae Menippeae* of Varro, written partly in prose and partly in verse in imitation of a work by the Cynic philosopher, Menippus of Gadara. Only fragments of Varro's work have come down to us: that of his model is entirely lost.

[5] Felipe de Sega, Bishop of Plasencia in Spain and Papal Legate.

a comedy as well as a pamphlet. But it is the second part, the speeches of the principal actors in the drama of the Estates, which has conferred on it immortality.

It must be borne in mind that the object of the writers was twofold—to expose the purely selfish aims of the speakers, and to hold them up to ridicule. Had they contented themselves with burlesquing the speeches which were actually made or were likely to have been made in the Estates they would have missed their first object. For a speaker in a public assembly who has selfish aims naturally wears a mask. While therefore the speakers in the satire are represented with their individual characteristics of style and manner, they are impelled by an irresistible impulse to speak the truth. Each speaker throws down his mask and shews his true face. Mayenne wants to be king himself, the Archbishop of Lyons looks for a Cardinal's hat, the Cardinal de Pellevé is in the pay of Spain, Rieux seeks in the general disorder an opportunity for plundering his neighbours. This is the idea which gives artistic unity to the satire, and of which Le Roy is apparently entitled to all the credit. The speeches are seven in number. According to Pierre Dupuy[1], who besides being a man of sound learning was a great collector of curious books, Gillot wrote that of the Cardinal Legate, Florent Chrestien that of the Cardinal de Pellevé, Rapin those of the Archbishop of Lyons and the Rector of the University, and Pierre Pithou that of D'Aubray[2]. For the remaining two speeches, those of Mayenne and the Sieur de Rieux, he gives no author[3]. Yet of the first six speeches Mayenne's, which opens the ball, is the best. In a tone of jovial good-humour, which was probably habitual to him, he is made to expose his motives and intentions with blunt sincerity:

[1] B. 1582, d. 1651. His edition of the *Ménippée* was published after his death, in 1664. He was a friend of Pierre de l'Estoile, and the two used to lend each other their treasures.

[2] *C'est mon frère Pierre qui l'a fait* is written according to Goujet, XV. xxvi. in a copy of the *Satire Ménippée* belonging to François Pithou.

[3] Girart in the *Rev. hist.* XXIX. 340 ff. shows that Passerat wrote the *Discours de l'imprimeur*, and possibly also that of the Sieur de Rieux.

Car, encore que j'aye faict semblant, par ma derniere *Declaration* et par ma *Response* subsequente, de desirer la conversion du Roy de Navarre, je vous prie croire que je ne desire rien moins ; et aimeroy mieux veoir ma femme, mon nepveu et tous mes cousins et parents morts que veoir ce Biarnois à la messe. Ce n'est pas là où il me demange.

Aussi ne me conseilleriez-vous pas que, pour une messe que le Roy de Navarre pourroit faire chanter (ce qu'à Dieu ne plaise), je me demisse du pouvoir que j'ay, et que, de demy Roy que je suis, je devinsse valet, et pour faire tomber l'orage de ceste guerre sur la teste de ces bons Catholiques Espagnols, nos amis qui nous veulent apprendre à croire en Dieu. Bien est vray que, si ladite conversion advenoit à bon escient, je seroy en grande peine et tiendroy le loup par les oreilles.

The Cardinal Legate speaks partly in Italian and partly in Latin, and the other Cardinal partly in dog Latin and partly in French. The latter's speech is a model of inconsequence, while the legate expounds the policy of the Pope in terms as delightfully plain as those used by Mayenne :

It is far better for the peace of Italy and the security of the Holy Apostolic See that the French and Spaniards should fight in France or indeed in Flanders for religion or the crown than in Italy for Naples or Milan[1]. Therefore, to tell you the truth, the Holy Father does not care what you do except so far as it concerns him not to be deprived of the annates and commendams and other subsidies which are paid at Rome with your gold and silver.

To the Archbishop of Lyons, Pierre d'Espinac, is assigned the *rôle* of a distinguished orator skilfully working upon the feelings of his hearers and appealing to their several interests :

Or, ce qui importe, pour le present, le plus à nos affaires, c'est de bastir une loy fondamentale par laquelle les peuples François seront tenuz de se laisser coiffer, embeguiner, enchevestrer, et mener à l'appetit de Messieurs les Cathedrants ; voire se laisseront escorcher jusques aux os, et curer leurs bourses jusques au fond, sans dire mot ny s'enquerir pourquoy. Car vous sçavez, Messieurs, que nous avons affaire de nos pensions[2].

His own ambition is to be a Cardinal. He is followed by Guillaume Roze, Rector of the University and Bishop of Senlis,

[1] This is in the primitive text.

[2] Improved from the primitive text, more especially the last sentence which replaces *pour continuer les pensions à nos espions catholiques.*

and one of the most violent preachers on the side of the League. His actions and speeches had been latterly so strange that he was believed to be out of his mind, and this is the character assigned to him in the satire. He makes a furious attack on Mayenne, exposing his selfish aims with the licensed frankness of a madman. Then comes the Sieur de Rieux as the representative of the nobles in the Estates. His speech is that of a ruffian and bandit, a character which he does not seem in real life to have deserved, though he had the misfortune to be tried and hanged shortly before the *Satire Ménippée* was printed[1].

This speech concludes the satirical part of the work, and one cannot speak too highly of the quality of the satire. While the writers leave no doubt as to their meaning they never become wearisome by iteration and are often content to let their readers draw an inference for themselves. Appealing to a fairly popular audience they do not write above their heads, nor do they write down to them. They are neither too subtle nor too obvious.

The last speech, that of Monsieur d'Aubray for the Third Estate, which is longer than all the others put together, is of a wholly different character. It is a model of serious eloquence. D'Aubray, we have seen, was at this time the leader of the *politique* party in Paris, but how far the speech put in his mouth by Pierre Pithou corresponds to the speech actually made by him at the meeting of the Estates it is impossible to say. Nor can we say whether the popular tone and phraseology of the speech in the *Ménippée* represents his real manner of speaking[2].

Par nostre Dame, Messieurs, vous nous l'avez baillé belle[3]. It is on this popular note that the speech begins. It is soon raised to one of lofty eloquence:

> O Paris, qui n'es plus Paris, mais une spelonque de bestes farouches,

[1] See S. Prioux, *Communication sur le Sieur de Rieux*, 1864. He was hanged on March 11.

[2] Palma Cayet's short summaries of speeches by him on other occasions do not enable us to judge.

[3] In the primitive text.

une citadelle d'Espagnols, Wallons et Neapolitains, un asyle et seure retraite de voleurs, meurtriers et assassinateurs, ne veux-tu jamais te ressentir de ta dignité, et te souvenir qui tu as esté, au prix de ce que tu es? Ne veux-tu jamais te guarir de ceste frenesie qui, pour un legitime et gratieux Roy, t'a engendré cinquante Roytelets et cinquante tyrans? Te voila aux fers! Te voila en l'Inquisition d'Espagne, plus intolérable mille fois et plus dure à supporter aux esprits nez libres et francs, comme sont les François, que les plus cruelles morts dont les Espagnols se sçauroient adviser!

Then after a while it drops again to the level of a historical retrospect of affairs from "that miserable peace (Cateau-Cambresis), sealed by the death of our good king Henry II." This is skilfully turned into a direct attack on Mayenne, whose policy and action from the day of the Barricades is carefully investigated. His double-dealing, his ambition, and above all his incapacity when opposed to Henry IV, are exposed. The situation of Paris is then compared to that of Jerusalem when besieged by Titus[1]. The same ruin and desolation awaits the people of Paris, unless by a miracle they recover their good sense:

Car il est impossible que puissions longuement durer ainsy, estant desjà si abattus et alangouris de longue maladie que les souspirs que nous tirons ne sont plus que les sanglots de la mort. Nous sommes serrez, pressez, envahis, bouclez de toutes parts, et ne prenons air que l'air puant d'entre nos murailles, de nos boues et egouts; car tout autre air de la liberté des champs nous est deffendu.

Apprenez donc, villes libres, apprenez, par nostre dommage, à vous gouverner d'ores en avant d'autre façon, et ne vous laissez plus enchevestrer, comme avons faict, par les charmes et enchantements des prescheurs, corrompus de l'argent et de l'esperance que leur donnent les princes, qui n'aspirent qu'à vous engager et rendre si foibles et si souples qu'ils puissent jouir de vous, et de vos biens, et de vostre liberté, à leur plaisir! Car ce qu'ils vous font entendre de la religion n'est qu'un masque dont ils amusent les simples, comme les renards amusent les pies de leurs longues queues, pour les attraper et manger à leur ayse.

Then the speaker turns on the Cardinal Legate and exposes first the designs of Spain and next those of the Holy See. *Ha! Monsieur le Legat, vous estes descouvert, le voile est levé! Il n'y a plus de charmes qui nous empeschent de veoir clair:*

[1] This comparison is in the primitive text.

nostre necessité nous a osté la taye des yeux, comme vostre ambition la met aux vostres. Finally comes the question of the choice of king. *Nous demandons un Roy et chef naturel, non artificiel; un Roy desja faict, et non à faire.....En un mot nous voulons que Monsieur le Lieutenant sçache que nous reconnoissons pour nostre vray Roy legitime, naturel, et souverain seigneur, Henry de Bourbon, cy-devant Roy de Navarre.*

The speech is designedly popular in tone, and does not shrink from familiar phrases. Compared with the other specimens of eloquence noticed in this chapter, such as the *Tigre* of Hotman and the *Anti-Espagnol* of Arnaud, or with the speeches of Du Vair, which will be noticed in a later chapter, it is much less closely modelled on classical examples. Pithou has learnt from Demosthenes and Cicero the spirit of true eloquence, but he expresses it in a thoroughly French fashion. In this true reading of the lesson of classical literature, in this penetration of its spirit without a touch of slavish imitation, he is the forerunner of Boileau and Molière. The historical part of the speech is admirably done, being remarkable for the accuracy with which the facts are stated and the impartiality with which they are judged. The whole summary of events is as able as that of Hurault in his two *Discours*, and is presented in a more popular fashion. It is perhaps easy to fall into exaggeration in speaking of Pithou's performance. It is by no means all on the same high plane, but if the emotion of the reader may be taken as a test of his eloquence, there are certain passages in it which are worthy to rank with Demosthenes or Cicero, with Burke or Bossuet.

The first known edition of the *Ménippée* concludes with seventeen pieces of verse attributed to Passerat and Rapin[1] of which the following is a specimen :

Mon Dieu, qu'ils sont beaux et blonds
Vos doublons !
Faictes-en chercher encores,
Demy-mores,
Parmy vos jaunes sablons.

[1] A manuscript note to a copy of the *Ménippée* in the Arsenal library says that Rapin wrote the Latin verses and Passerat the French ones (Read, p. 310).

Ou bien vous en retournez,
Bazannez :
Paris, qui n'est votre proye,
Vous renvoye
Avecques cent pieds de nez !

The number of pieces was afterwards increased to forty and in a later edition they were followed by Gilles Durant's *Asne ligueur*[1]. It was a worthy conclusion to a work compact of humour.

If the *Satire Ménippée* is essentially artistic both in conception and execution the same cannot be said of the only remaining pamphlet which it is necessary to notice, the *Tableau des differens de la religion* of Philippe de Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde[2], the well-known friend of William the Silent, whose surrender of Antwerp was so severely criticised. *Il a mis la religion en rabelaiserie, ce qui est très mal fait*, is De Thou's apposite description and just censure of the book. In none of the followers of Rabelais whom I have discussed in a previous chapter do we find so close a reproduction of the master's language[3], though it is noticeable that the disciple is especially attracted by that part of the Fifth Book of which Rabelais's authorship is most doubtful. But his kinship to Rabelais is purely on the surface. If like Rabelais he treats of grave subjects in a tone of buffoonery, he does not like Rabelais respect the more solemn mysteries. If he masquerades in his master's clothes, he has caught nothing of his spirit. We may allow him the merit of clear, forcible and picturesque language, and the curious student may reap from his book a harvest of popular expressions, but the work as a whole is thoroughly bad art. It is in short a first-rate example of a common defect of French Renaissance writers, their inability to grasp the fact that each kind of literature has its appropriate form and tone. Thus while Sainte Aldegonde's book is in conception, arrangement, and extent a grave theo-

[1] *Ante*, p. 58.

[2] Born at Brussels in 1538, died in 1598.

[3] See A. Delboulle, *M. de Sainte Aldegonde, plagiaire de Rabelais* in *Rev. d'hist. litt.*, III. (1896) 440 ff.

logical treatise, the tone, though sometimes correspondingly grave, perpetually drops into that of a satirical pamphlet. Moreover the satire is too coarse and the polemic too bitter to be really effective. It must be admitted however that it suited the taste of the day, for the book for a time was highly popular. But though it may be true, as Bayle says[1], that "a great number of persons were more strongly confirmed in their belief by it than by Calvin's masterpiece," it can hardly have converted a single individual.

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[1] See Lenient, I. 262—266.

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CHAPTER XXVI

D'AUBIGNÉ

If, leaving Rabelais out of account, the *Satire Ménippée* is the chief example of prose satire in the literature of the French Renaissance, verse satire, or at any rate the classical form of it, is best represented by D'Aubigné and Regnier. It is true that *Les Tragiques* is an epic rather than a satire in intention, but the natural bent of D'Aubigné's genius was in the direction of satire, and it is the satirical passages of *Les Tragiques* which constitute its chief merit. It is also true that this poem, like Regnier's satires, was not published till after the close of the Renaissance period, not indeed till 1616, three years after Regnier's death, when the older school of literature was fast falling into discredit under the growing influence of Malherbe. But *Les Tragiques*, though not published till this late season, was circulated in manuscript as early as 1593[1]. Moreover D'Aubigné in his versatility, his imaginative fervour, and his careless workmanship is a typical representative of the Renaissance. His versatility is amazing; a lyric as well as an epic poet; a *conteur* as well as a satirist; a memoir writer, a pamphleteer, and a historian, he might have found a place in several chapters of this history. But everything he wrote bears the impress of his remarkable personality, and to deal with his writings piecemeal is to miss the man himself.

Rather let us take as the starting-point for the consideration of his work the autobiography which he wrote for his children towards the close of his long life. In the preface he forbade its publication, and the injunction was kept for a hundred

[1] D'Aubigné, *Hist. Univ.*, ed. Ruble, VIII. 327.

years. But in 1729, after being modernised to suit the taste of the eighteenth century, it was published at Brussels under the title of *Histoire Secrète.* Then in 1851 M. Lalanne, having found in the library of the Louvre a manuscript of the text which had belonged to M^me^ de Maintenon, D'Aubigné's granddaughter, printed from it the first authentic edition[1].

Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné, generally known as Agrippa d'Aubigné, was born near Pons in Saintonge in February, 1552. His father, who belonged to the lesser nobility, and was an active leader of the Huguenot party, solemnly initiated him, when still a boy, into the service of the cause. They were riding together through the town of Amboise soon after the 'Tumult,' in which the father had taken part, when they suddenly came upon the suspended heads of some of the conspirators. Placing his hand on the boy's head the elder D'Aubigné said in solemn accents, "My child, to avenge those honourable men you must not spare your life, as I shall not spare mine; spare it and you will earn my curse." Agrippa was then eight; at eleven his father died from the effects of a wound, and his mother having died in giving him birth he was left alone in the world with only a slender fortune. There was enough however to pay for his education, which according to his own account had been going on ever since he was four years old, when he began to learn Greek, Latin and Hebrew concurrently. At six he could read in all those languages as well as in French, and at seven with some assistance from his tutor he had translated the Crito of Plato.

At his father's death he was at the University of Orleans, having for his private tutor Matthieu Béroald, the father of the author of the *Moyen de parvenir*[2]. At the age of thirteen he went to the University of Geneva and studied there for two years. At sixteen he entered on his military career, and in the following year (1569) shared in the Huguenot defeat at Jarnac. Fighting was his element, and when he entered

[1] The text in MM. Réaume and Caussade's edition of the *Œuvres complètes* is printed from the original text in the Tronchin collection in the *château de Bessinges*, near Geneva. The Louvre MS. was burnt during the Commune.

[2] See *ante*, p. 188.

the service of the King of Navarre in 1573 it was with the recommendation that he was a man "who found nothing too warm."

He spent the next three years at the French Court, throwing himself into its dissipations with characteristic energy and love of emulation. But in 1576 the King of Navarre made his escape from Paris, and during the next seventeen years of his adventurous life he had no more loyal or devoted servant than D'Aubigné. The relations between the two men were sometimes severely strained, partly from Henry's innate levity of heart, partly from D'Aubigné's jealous and sensitive temperament. But whenever there was any dangerous work to do D'Aubigné was there to do it. In 1587 he took part in the Protestant victory of Coutras. In the following year, having captured the fortified town of Maillezais, he remained there as governor, being, as he says, *trop las de courir*. It was his first rest, he adds, for twenty years.

Henry's conversion was a great blow to him, and he ever afterwards looked on him as a renegade to his party. For though not wanting in political insight D'Aubigné was no statesman; the state in his eyes was of less importance than the party. Thus though from time to time Henry shewed his old adherent some mark of favour, D'Aubigné retired more and more into the background. It was indeed almost impossible to keep up friendly relations with so inveterate a *frondeur*, who had so high an estimate of his own merits and services and so bitter a contempt for men more supple and less honest than himself. He lived chiefly at Maillezais, then a place of some importance, not only as one of the Protestant places of surety but as commanding Lower Poitou and covering La Rochelle. He may have reflected with pleasure that Rabelais had been a nominal inmate of the Benedictine Abbey at Maillezais and a close friend of the Bishop's. But he little dreamt that the neighbouring bishop of Luçon, "the dirtiest and most disagreeable see in France[1]," would before long rule France with almost absolute sway.

[1] "*Jay le plus vilain évesché de France, le plus crotté et le plus désagréable.*" Richelieu to M^me^ de Bourges, April, 1609. (*Lettres*, ed. Avenel, I. 24.)

The King's death severed his last tie with the Court. During the troubles of the regency he was in close communication with the discontented nobles, with Bouillon and Condé and Rohan. But it was not till 1620 that on a summons from Rohan, the recognised chief of the Huguenot party, he reluctantly joined the standard of revolt. On the "Queen's peace" being made in the same year he fled to Geneva, where he spent the last ten years of his life as an honoured citizen, finding employment for his ceaseless energy in constructing a new system of fortifications both for Geneva and Berne. In 1623, being over seventy, he married as his second wife a widow named Renée Burlamachi. Shortly before this event he had heard of his condemnation to death in France—it was for the fourth time—for having used for his own house some stones of a ruined church.

In 1626 he published a new edition of his *Histoire universelle*, the first edition of which had been printed at his own press at Maillé, close to Maillezais, appearing in three parts, from 1616 to 1620. At Maillé too he had printed his long poem *Les Tragiques* (1616), and the first three parts of a satirical pamphlet entitled *Les aventures du baron de Fœneste*. It was a belated appearance in the field of authorship. For not only was he between sixty and seventy years of age, but the literary school in which he had been brought up and to which he adhered as loyally as he did to his religious party was passing rapidly out of fashion. His last literary labour was the addition in 1630 of a fourth part to *Fœneste*, causing thereby great scandal to the grave city of Geneva. The Council suppressed the book and ordered the author to be reprimanded, but within a month he was beyond the reach of earthly censure. He died on May 9, Ascension Day, 1630, at the age of seventy-eight[1].

His autobiography, which is the main source for the facts of his life, and which he began to write in 1623, is of all his

[1] The date in the public records of Geneva is April 29 O.S. His widow in a letter printed in *Bull. Prot.* XLII. 32 f. (1893) gives the date as Thursday, April 21. But the 21st was a Wednesday, and D'Aubigné made his will on April 24.

writings the most free from defects. It is a well-told record, and, making due allowance for the natural lapses in memory of an old man and for a certain tendency to self-glorification, it is on the whole a trustworthy record of a singularly active and romantic life. It is also the revelation of an interesting and noble character, though that character is somewhat complex, and is chequered with many crossing lights and shadows. If D'Aubigné was self-confident, vain-glorious, obstinate, quarrelsome, rough in speech and manner, he was also chivalrous, loyal, honourable, full of warm and tender feeling. Finally, the *Vie à ses enfants* has a merit which is somewhat rare in sixteenth century literature; it is short and concise. This is partly due to D'Aubigné's compressed style, to which I shall recur, but also to the fact that he had already related in his History a good many incidents of his career which can hardly be said to be of historical importance, and which would more naturally have found a place in his autobiography.

In fact the critics of his day declared that the *Histoire Universelle* was nothing but his personal memoirs[1]. There is considerable truth in this, and from the historical point of view it is no doubt a grave defect. But the chief literary merit of his book lies in the vivid description of scenes of which he was an eye-witness. If you look for the ordinary qualities of a historian, for accuracy, a sense of proportion, or the critical examination of conflicting reports, you will look in vain, but you may see with D'Aubigné's eyes the stirring scenes of a great drama, and you may breathe the very atmosphere of the Huguenot camp.

It was Henry of Navarre who as far back as 1577 invited D'Aubigné to become his historian. "Begin, sire, to act," was his reply, "and I will begin to write." But though it was not till thirty-five years afterwards that the work was finally accomplished[2] he adhered to his intention. Henry IV

[1] See D'Aubigné's answer to his critics in the letter from the printer to the reader, *Hist. Universelle*, ed. Ruble, I. 19.

[2] In a letter undated, but evidently written in 1618, he says it had been finished for six years (*Œuvres*, I. 471).

is the central figure of the *Histoire Universelle*, as he is of Sully's memoirs; the book opens with his birth, giving a summary of events down to the outbreak of the Religious Wars, and though it ends with the century his death is related in an appendix[1].

The plan of the work is a singular one. Each of the three volumes is divided into five books, and each book concludes with a treaty of peace, while the last four chapters but one of each book deal respectively with the countries of the East, the South, the West, and the North. It is needless to point out that this regularity of plan is fatal to historical proportion. Nor can it be said that the author's attempt to embrace the history of other countries adds any real value to his work, or justifies the title of *Universal History*. A more appropriate title would be The Huguenot Apology for the Religious Wars of France. But though D'Aubigné cannot help writing as a Huguenot, he has a high sense of the historian's duty of impartiality[2]. His work is in no sense a piece of special pleading; he lets the facts speak for themselves, and hardly ever criticises or moralises; he is scrupulously fair to his opponents; he has an evident liking and respect for the Guises, while of Henry III he speaks in the following terms:

> Prince d'agréable conversation avec les siens, amateur des lettres, libéral par-delà tous les rois, courageux en jeunesse et lors désiré de tous; en vieillesse aimé de peu, qui avoit de grandes parties de roi, souhaité pour l'estre, avant qu'il le fust, et digne du royaume s'il n'eust point régné; c'est ce qu'en peut dire un bon François[3].

His work is professedly a military history, and he therefore devotes a good deal of space to the account of battles and sieges, some of them indeed petty skirmishes which derive all their importance from his share in them. It is true that he hardly ever refers directly to himself, but the veil under

[1] The account of Biron's conspiracy and death forms another appendix.

[2] See besides his eloquent preface a letter to Simon Goulart (*Œuvres*, I. 472 ff.).

[3] *lib.* XII. c. xxii (ed. Ruble, VIII. 78).

which he conceals his presence[1] is not too thick to hide his identity. From a literary point of view one could spare the battles better than the skirmishes, for D'Aubigné is far from successful in his descriptions of a pitched battle. This is partly because he is too fond of technical terms, many of which are unintelligible to the modern reader, but also because he has himself no clear vision of the battle as a whole[2]. We may perhaps except from this general condemnation the accounts of Dreux and St Denis, though of the latter battle we have a clearer narrative both from La Noue and Tavannes.

Military history though it is, the remarkable passages in D'Aubigné's book are not the accounts of battles but the dramatic scenes and other events which lend themselves to stirring and vivid narrative, such as the scene between Coligny and his wife at the outbreak of the war[3], the escape of Henry of Navarre from Paris[4], the death-chamber of Henry III when Navarre was hesitating as to his future action[5], the siege of Paris[6], and the famous comparison between Navarre and Mayenne[7]. D'Aubigné is fond of drawing portraits shewing himself in this as in some other matters a close student of Tacitus. Take this of the Constable de Montmorency; *grand capitaine, bon serviteur, mauvais ami, profitant des inventions, labeurs et pertes d'autrui, agissant par ruses; mais à leur défaut, usant de sa valeur*[8]. No doubt this portrait leaves out a good many features and the term *grand capitaine* seems unsuited to so unsuccessful a commander as Montmorency, but it is a clever and artistic sketch, and it is probably as true to life as most literary portraits. This love of portraiture is a sign of D'Aubigné's interest in human

[1] He generally refers to himself as *un écuyer du roi de Navarre*, sometimes as *un capitaine* or *un maître de camp*.

[2] *Autant vaudrait donner dans une forêt de piques que de nous jeter dans ses récits d'Arques ou de Coutras, si on n'avait pas d'autre narration plus distinct pour en prendre idée.* Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, x. 329.

[3] III. ii.

[4] VII. xx. Littré, *Littérature et histoire*, 1875, pp. 193 ff., thinks that Schiller was indebted to this scene for the idea of his dialogue between Gertrud and Stauffacher in the First Act of *Wilhelm Tell*, but the resemblance is only slight.

[5] XII. xxiii. [6] XIII. vii. [7] XIII. xxiii. [8] IV. x.

nature, and it is mainly the same psychological interest which gives a value to his admirable summaries of the political situation. The remarkable chapter on the decline of the League, which opens with the comparison between the King of Navarre and Mayenne, may be described as a psychological study of the two parties, and it is interesting to find in it a reference to a conversation with Montaigne, the very man whose Essays gave so much stimulus to the study of human nature[1].

Considering D'Aubigné's temperament it is greatly to his credit that there is so little trace in it of party passion. If this is due in part to his lofty conception of the historian's functions, it must also be remembered that when the work was completed, not only had his master's death two years before revived all his old feelings of loyalty and admiration, but he himself had mellowed and softened.

It was otherwise in the interval between the King's conversion and the Edict of Nantes, when D'Aubigné, filled with bitterness at what seemed to him the desertion of his party by King and courtiers, wrote the savage satire of the *Confession catholique du sieur de Sancy*. Nicolas Harlay de Sancy had faithfully followed his royal master's changes in religion. Born a Protestant he had become a Catholic at the massacre of St Bartholomew, had returned to Protestantism, and in the year 1597 was once more received into the arms of the Catholic Church[2]. "There is nothing left for him," said Henry IV, forgetful of his own changes, "but to turn Turk[3]." But Sancy was an able man and had done good service and had been well rewarded for it. In D'Aubigné's eyes therefore he was the typical apostate who barters his religion for place and pelf. The pamphlet purports to be Sancy's explanation of his conversion addressed to Jacques Du Perron, the Bishop of Evreux

[1] "*Suivant ce que me dit un jour Michel Montagne, assavoir que les prétendans à la Couronne trouvent tous les eschelons jusques au marchepied du throsne et petits et aisez, mais que le dernier ne se pouvoit franchir pour sa hauteur.*"

[2] The *Confession de Sancy* was begun and possibly the main portion was written at this time, but it contains many references to later events.

[3] *Il ne fallait plus que turban.* P. de L'Estoile, *Journal*, VII. 95.

and future Cardinal, to whose religious instruction he professed that it was due. This framework serves D'Aubigné for a bitter attack on Sancy and other men, such as Sponde and Palma Cayet, who had yielded to Du Perron's persuasive arguments, on Du Perron himself, who is always referred to as *M. le Convertisseur*, on Protestants like Michel Hurault and Jean de Serres whom he regarded as lukewarm in the cause, on the Roman Church in general, and on the Court of Henry III. The *Apologie pour Hérodote*, which is referred to in one place, has evidently served D'Aubigné as a model, and after the fashion of that work he has introduced a plentiful supply of scandalous and coarse stories. The satire is not without power, but it is far too savage, and the irony, which is its chief weapon, is somewhat clumsy and deficient in humour. But, as in everything D'Aubigné wrote, there are flashes of genius, such as: *Ce n'est pas changer que de suivre tousjours même but. J'ay eu pour but, sans changer, le profit, l'honneur, l'aise et la seurté*[1], and *Mais quel aise peuvent sentir les Huguenots cousus en leurs cuirasses, comme tortuës en leurs coquilles? Pour leur seurté ils n'ont que Dieu pour tout potage, où un homme de mon humeur ne se fie qu'à raison*[2].

Les aventures du baron de Fœneste[3] is written with a much lighter hand. The characters of the two chief interlocutors, though slightly drawn, are sufficiently indicated, and shew considerable humour. Fæneste is a young Gascon swash-buckler and courtier, who, as his name implies, cares only for appearances, while his friend Enay, an elderly gentleman of Poitou with long experience of the Court and war, stands for reality[4]. On this framework is built up what D'Aubigné describes as 'a picture of the age with some true and amusing

[1] *Œuvres*, II. 335.

[2] *ib.*, p. 338. Some French writers have a much higher opinion of the work. Poirson, for instance, says: *Sous tous les rapports la Confession de Sancy est un chef d'œuvre parmi les essais de notre littérature naissante: Pascal et Saint-Simon l'ont étudié pour le surpasser et ne l'ont pas effacé entièrement.* (*Hist. de Henri IV*, IV. 348.) M. Faguet calls it *la première des Provinciales*.

[3] *Œuvres*, II. 375—651.

[4] Fæneste from the Greek φαίνεσθαι, to appear, and Enay from εἶναι, to be. See D'Aubigné's preface to the first book.

stories' (*en ramassant quelques bourdes vrayes*). Here again we trace the inspiration of Henri Estienne, and the stories play even a larger part than they do in the *Confession de Sancy;* they are not only more numerous, but they are longer and more amusing. It is needless to add that they are not all for edification. The first three books, which appeared from 1617 to 1619, give a picture of Court life during the regency of Marie de' Medici, when the extravagance of the nobles in dress and other forms of personal display was becoming more and more ridiculous. The fourth book, which was added, as we have seen, in 1630, begins by relating the experiences of Fæneste at the Huguenot defeat at the Pont-de-Cè (1620), and in the recent wars in the Valtelline and Piedmont. It concludes with a collection of stories relating to preachers.

D'Aubigné is a good *raconteur*; he is neither too bald and brief like Béroalde de Verville, nor on the other hand does he, like Rabelais, overlay his story with a too great wealth of embroidery. He has also a fair share of the dramatising faculty. Some excellent stories are to be found in his letters. His version of the well-known story of the Comte de Lorges and his mistress's glove is better than Brantôme's[1], and he has some remarkable stories about weir-wolves and witchcraft and divination[2]. A selection from his letters would also include two clever character-sketches of the elder Biron, and Pomponne de Bellièvre, chancellor to Henry IV[3], a somewhat flowery letter sent to James I with a copy of the *Histoire Universelle*, a manly and eloquent one addressed to Louis XIII, an amusing one to Odet de la Noue[4], and the letters about *vers mesurés* and the poets of his day[5] to which I have referred in a previous chapter[6].

[1] *Œuvres*, I. 328 ff. For Brantôme's version see his *Œuvres*, IX. 390.

[2] In a series of letters addressed to La Rivière, the king's first physician (*Œuvres*, I. 422 ff.).

[3] *ib.* 186; 275.

[4] *ib.* 331; 501; 465.

[5] *ib.* 453; 457.

[6] See *ante*, pp. 8 and 22. In another letter he refers to some sort of telegraphic invention (*ib.* 299).

The chief impression that D'Aubigné's prose style, more especially in his *History*, leaves upon the reader, is that of extreme rapidity which seems to reflect the feverish energy of the writer. Notable examples are the opening of the Third book (which includes the account of the massacre of Vassy), the narrative of the Barricades[1], and that of the assassination of Henry of Guise[2]. Rapidity of style generally implies brevity, but D'Aubigné's brevity is partly owing to the influence of Tacitus[3]. We learn from the preface to the *Vie à ses enfants* that the followers of Henry of Navarre gave more time than he approved to the study of that author, and the young man in *Les Tragiques* who is represented as pouring over the deaths of Seneca and Thrasea is evidently D'Aubigné himself. D'Aubigné sometimes reproduces Tacitus's most pregnant phrases, as in the portrait of Mayenne, and in that of Henry III quoted above[4]. But he is no mere imitator of Tacitus or his style would be intolerable; rather, recognising in Tacitus a spiritual kinsman, he has acquired almost insensibly something of his concision and pregnancy. In this respect he is a marked contrast to most sixteenth-century writers, to Amyot with his smoothly flowing and redundant language, to Montaigne with his endless digressions, to Henri Estienne with his love of parentheses. In short while the more characteristic writers of the sixteenth century delight in playing round their subject, D'Aubigné, except on special occasions, goes straight to his goal, never looking back, never stopping for obstacles, forcing his way through grammar, syntax, and even sense. But this eagerness to despatch his subject leads him into the same defect as the digressive tendency of the great majority of his contemporaries. As Sainte-Beuve points out, D'Aubigné, like all sixteenth-century writers, suffers from a want of *netteté*, that untranslateable

[1] Book XI., c. xxiii.

[2] Book XII., c. xiv.

[3] In the notice to his readers which he affixed to his second volume, D'Aubigné apologises for the concision of his style: *Peut-estre que les clauses, entées l'une dans l'autre, pour rendre le style plus concis, contraindront un œil courant de rebrousser chemin* (ed. Ruble, VI. 367).

[4] *Ante*, p. 249.

French term, which Vauvenargues calls *le vernis des maîtres*[1].

But careless and rough though D'Aubigné generally is, when he chooses to take pains he is a considerable artist, with an eye for balance and proportion and the other requirements of prose architecture. Take for example the following passage from the admirably written preface to his *History*:

Je commence mon œuvre à la naissance de Henri quatriesme, justement surnommé le Grand; il n'est dédié à aucun qu'à la postérité. Mon dessein s'estend autant que ma vie et mon pouvoir. Je ne m'excuserai point par crainte ni par espérance, plus empesché à chastier l'excez de ma liberté qu'à me guérir du flatteur. Nourri aux pieds de mon Roi, desquels je faisois mon chevet en toutes les saisons de ses travaux; quelque temps eslevé en son sein, et sans compagnon en privauté, et lors plein des franchises et sévéritez de mon village, quelquesfois esloigné de sa faveur et de sa cour, et lors si ferme en mes fidélitez, que, mesme au temps de ma disgrâce, il m'a fié ses plus dangereux secrets, j'ai reçu de lui autant de biens qu'il m'en faloit pour durer, et non pour m'eslever. Et quand je me suis veu croisé par mes inférieurs, et par ceux mesmes qui sous mon nom estoyent entrez à son service, je me suis payé en disant: "Eux et moi avons bien servi; eux à la fantaisie du maistre, et moi à la mienne, qui me sert de contentement[2]."

Or the fine peroration to the treatise *Du debvoir mutuel des roys et des subjects*:

Le port de toutes nos tempestes est donc dans le havre et au giron de la mort, qui de nous entierement mesprisee ne peut plus nous espouvanter de ses moyens; car s'il faut donner du nés en terre dans une breche, ou en quelque autre sorte de combat, c'est trouver ce que nous avons tant cerché, c'est ce champ d'honneur duquel nous nous sommes tant vantés et que nous avons eu honte d'esquiver de deux pas en arriere, c'est pour celuy qui donne la vie heureuse et veritable pour la vaine et la fausse avec l'excellent gain au change, et au lieu de regrets nous comble de fœlicitez[3].

It is the imaginative character of D'Aubigné's prose which stamps it with the hall-mark of the sixteenth century. This

[1] *Causeries du Lundi*, x. 329.

[2] *Hist. Univ.*, i. viii.

[3] *Œuvres*, ii. 68. M. Faguet says of this passage, "*Il faut songer qu'il n'y a pas au xvi^e siècle une page d'éloquence supérieure à celle-ci, et qu'il faut aller loin à travers le xvii^e pour en trouver une autre qui la vaille*" (*Seizième siècle*, p. 340).

is perhaps less conspicuous in the *History* than in the *Confession de Sancy* and *Les Aventures de Fœneste*, the more familiar tone of which permits him to indulge more freely in the use of metaphor and especially of homely metaphor. His general freshness and raciness of speech also helps to give unfailing life and colour to his style. The following passage taken at haphazard from the *History* is a good average example of it:

> Au milieu de telles bordures, la France ne respirant que guerre, le roi, pour commencer la noise à son profit, sous couleur de secourir les protestans d'Allemagne, s'estoit saisi, par la ruse de son connestable, des villes de Mets, Toul et Verdun, commençoit à mugueter Strasbourg. Et, en mesme temps, la roine de Hongrie, sœur de l'empereur, ayant ramassé tout ce qu'elle put des Pays-Bas, vint prendre et fortifier Stenai, brusla force villes et bourgades vers la Champagne, contraignit le roi de tourner bride, joint aussi que les princes allemans avoyent cogneu ses desmarches[1].

In short, when D'Aubigné is at his best, which it must be confessed is not very often, he is inferior only to the two greatest prose-writers of the sixteenth century, to Rabelais and Montaigne, but he has considerable charm even in his most careless mood.

D'Aubigné was barely twenty when he made his first serious poetical effort. It was a sequence of a hundred sonnets in honour of Diane Salviati (a niece of Ronsard's Cassandre), which he entitled *Hecatombe à Diane*. The first thirty or so sonnets are an agreeable variation from the orthodox love-sonnets of the period, for they smell of smoke and powder[2], and they breathe the ardour of a lover who having been severely wounded by a would-be assassin rode sixty-six miles to die, as he thought, in his mistress's arms[3]. But D'Aubigné's inspiration is always somewhat short-winded, and before long the sonnets begin to decline to the level of poetical exercises. The odes which form the Third book

[1] Book I. beginning of c. vi (ed. Ruble, I. 41 f.).

[2] Ils sentent comme moy
La poudre, la mesche et le souffre.

[3] *Vie à ses enfants* (*Œuvres*, I. 20). The engagement was broken off by the lady's father owing to the difference of religion.

of his *Printemps*, the name he gave to this youthful poetry, are much what one would expect from a fervent disciple of Ronsard, but they shew a side of D'Aubigné's character which is apt to be overlooked, the grace and *esprit* which made him a conspicuous figure at the Court during the years which followed the St Bartholomew. The following lines have real merit; they might have been signed by Belleau or Baïf, and they would not have disgraced Ronsard himself.

Soubs la tremblante courtine
De ces bessons arbrisseaux,
Au murmure qui chemine
Dans ces gazouillans ruisseaux,
Sur un chevet touffu esmaillé des couleurs
D'un million de fleurs,
A ces babillars ramages
D'osillons d'amour espris,
Au flair des roses sauvages
Et des aubepins floris,
Portez, Zephirs pillars sur mille fleurs trottans,
L'haleine du Printemps[1].

And there is wit as well as modesty in the *envoi*:

Lecteur, pour m'excuser qu'est ce
Que je pourrois dire?—Rien.
Si j'allegue ma jeunesse,
Tu diras: je le vois bien[2].

But on the whole it is easier to find good lines and good stanzas than good poems. The very impetuosity which was so marked a feature in D'Aubigné's character first inspired his Muse and then betrayed her. He has not only poetical feeling but considerable power of poetical expression, bold images, picturesque and felicitous words, and a sense of harmony. But he has not the patience to polish or blot; thoughts, images, and words come tumbling over one another.

[1] Ode vii (*Œuvres* III. 131), and see also Odes xvi (*ib.* 152) and xxiii (*ib.* 168). Ode ix is a variation on Desportes's *Rozette, pour un peu d'absence.*

[2] *ib.* 205.

Worse than this, when inspiration fails him he does not wait for its return. Thus while we get lines like,

> Devorant vos beautez de la faim de mon âme[1],

and

> Voici moins de plaisirs, mais voici moins de peines:
> Le rossignol se tait, se taisent les Syrenes;

and from the same poem, *L'Hiver du sieur D'Aubigné*,

> Qui a jamais esté si friande de voyage,
> Que la longueur en soit plus douce que la port[2]?

on the other hand it is only the very shortest pieces that are equally good throughout, such as the following epitaph on an infant:

> Cette grand' beauté si exquise,
> En bref temps esclose et reprise,
> Ne fut à nous que par depost:
> Le Ciel la monstra par merveille
> Comme une perle sans pareille
> Qu'on descouvre, et serre aussi tost[3].

In about the year 1575 D'Aubigné was introduced by Pierre de Brach to Du Bartas, who shewed him the beginning of his *Semaine*[4]. Fired by the spirit of emulation he wrote a long epic in fifteen cantos, entitled *La Creation*, which is a complete failure[5]. Then in 1577, being confined to his bed by the wounds he had received at the Homeric combat of Castel-Jaloux, he dictated the first part of a new epic, entitled *Les Tragiques*[6]. The constant fighting in which he was engaged for the next sixteen years left him little leisure for writing poetry, but the poem seems to have been practically completed before the death of Henry III and to have circulated

[1] Sonnet xxiii (*Œuvres*, III. 26).

[2] *ib.* 298.

[3] *ib.* 313. Of D'Aubigné's minor poems the only ones printed in his lifetime were *Vers funèbres sur Jodelle*, *Ballet de Circe* (1582), and those contained in *Petites œuvres meslées* (1630).

[4] I. 459.

[5] III. 325 ff.

[6] *Vie à ses enfants* (*Œuvres*, I. 33); *Hist. Univ.* lib. VIII. c. 14; Preface to *Les Tragiques* (*Œuvres*, IV. 4).

in manuscript soon afterwards[1]. It was not, however, till 1616 that D'Aubigné printed it at his private press at Maillé.

I have spoken of *Les Tragiques* as an epic, and it may roughly be described as a Huguenot epic, but it is so little of an epic that perhaps it is fairer to describe it in the author's own words as a poem in seven *tableaux*, of which two are in a lofty tragic style (the fifth and seventh), two are in the style of narrative (the first and sixth), and the remainder are in a medium style, the second and third being more or less satirical in character. But whatever we call the poem, it is badly planned as a whole, without any semblance of unity. Nor can much more be said for the individual *tableaux* of which it is composed. *Misères* is too general. *Les Feux* is merely a versification of Crespin's book of martyrs. *Les Fers* is confused; even the account of the St Bartholomew is poor. *Vengeances* opens well but degenerates into the worst part of the poem. *Jugement* begins badly but improves somewhat, though it cannot be said that the Vision of the Last Judgment which concludes the whole poem is really effective. D'Aubigné can see visions, but only in a confused fashion, as through the smoke of a battle. He is neither a Dante nor a Milton. Thus all the supernatural part of his poem fails to make a clear impression on the reader. Moreover his execution suffers from many of the faults of the ordinary pamphleteer of his day, especially from the love of piling up illustrations from classical and biblical history.

By far the best book of the poem is the second, entitled *Princes*, for it is here that D'Aubigné indulges most freely in satire. The whole of the last quarter of the book, which describes the arrival at Court of a young man and his father, is admirable, and has all the realistic force of personal observation. It is here that we find the famous description of the *mignons*:

> Ce courtisan grison s'esmerveillant de quoy
> Quelqu'un mesconnoissoit les mignons de son Roy,

[1] The preface (*ib.* IV. 10) speaks of Henry IV having read *tous les Tragiques plusieurs fois* when he was King of Navarre, and see *Hist. Univ.* lib. XIII. c. 23 (ed. Ruble, VIII. 327).

Raconte leurs grandeurs, comment la France entiere,
Escabeau de leurs pieds, leur estoit tributaire.
A l'enfant qui disoit : "Sont-ils grands terriens,
Que leur nom est sans nom par les historiens?"
Il respond: "Rien du tout, il sont mignons du Prince."
Ont-ils sur l'Espagnol conquis quelque province?
Ont-ils par leur conseil relevé un mal heur,
Delivré leur païs par extreme valeur?
Ont-ils sauvé le Roy, commandé quelque armee
Et par elle gaigné quelq' heureuse journee?
A tout fut respondu : "Mon jeune homme, je croy
Que vous estes bien neuf, ce sont mignons du Roy[1]."

. . . . . .

Ils en content autant qu'il faut pour se vanter;
Lisants ils ont pillé les pointes pour escrire,
Ils sçavent en jugeant admirer ou sousrire,
Loüer tout froidement, si ce n'est pour du pain,
Renier son salut quand il y va du gain,
Barbets des favoris, premiers à les connoistre,
Singes des estimez, bons eschos de leur maistre:
Voila à quel sçavoir il te faut limiter,
Que ton esprit ne puisse un Juppin irriter[2].

Earlier in the book is the equally famous portrait of Henry III:

Avoir raz le menton, garder la face pasle,
Le geste effeminé, l'œil d'un Sardanapale:
Si bien qu'un jour des Rois ce douteux animal,
Sans cervelle, sans front, parut tel en son bal:
De cordons emperlez sa chevelure pleine,
Sous un bonnet sans bord, faict à l'Italienne,
Faisoit deux arcs voutez; son menton pinceté,
Son visage de blanc et de rouge empasté,
Son chef tout empoudré, nous monstrerent ridee,
En la place d'un Roy, une putain fardée[3].

The next book, *La Chambre dorée*, which is also mainly satirical, has some fine passages, but the allegory in it is overdone. A few other good passages will be found scattered up and down the poem. They are chiefly satirical in character,

[1] *Œuvres*, IV. 114.

[2] *ib.* 118.

[3] *ib.* 101. It is interesting to compare this with the portrait of the *Histoire Universelle* quoted above (*ante*, p. 249).

such as the account of how Charles IX on the day of the St Bartholomew *giboyait aux passans trop tardif à noyer.*

The close of *Les Fers* is a fine piece of rhetoric, there is true pathos in the account of the martyrdom of Philippe de Luns, Mme de Graveron in *Les Feux*[1], and there is exquisite beauty in the following lines from *La Chambre dorée*:

Les cendres des bruslez sont precieuses graines,
Qui aprés les hyvers noirs d'orage et de pleurs,
Ouvrent au doux printemps d'un million de fleurs
Le baume salutaire, et sont nouvelles plantes
Au millieu des parvis de Sion fleurissantes.

D'Aubigné excels also in single lines and couplets such as:

Chasque goutte de sang que le feu fict voller
Porta le nom de Dieu et aux cœurs vint parler.

Comme un nageur venant du profond de son plonge,
Tous sortent de la mort comme l'on sort d'un songe[2].

Une rose d'automne est plus d'une autre exquise.

Rompu et corrompu au trictrac des affaires,

and the magnificent

Et Dieu seul, au desert pauvrement hebergé,
A basti tout le monde et n'y est pas logé.

Of lines such as these D'Aubigné might well say,

l'acier de mes vers
Burinoit vostre histoire aux yeux de l'univers.

In fact, had D'Aubigné written social satires, in the manner of Juvenal, he might have equalled or surpassed his model, for to the concentrated energy, the lofty declamation, the descriptive power of the Roman poet he would have added a greater sincerity and a more intimate knowledge of the world. But he never found his true literary vocation; he tried many kinds of writing but he did not give himself up to any; he has left some splendid fragments, but no masterpiece. The best part of his life was given to the service of his party; his noblest monument is the History in which that party is enshrined.

[1] *Œuvres*, IV. p. 147.

[2] Cf. La Fontaine's

Sortons ce ces riches palais
Comme l'on sortiroit d'un songe. (*Fables*, X. 10.)

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[1] I have not seen either of these editions; M. Muller, one of the *conservateurs* of the Arsenal Library, informs me that they are printed in different type, that of the 4^to^ edition being considerably larger. There were copies of both in M. de Ruble's library (*Cat. Ruble*, Nos. 219, 220).

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Some writers (Ch. Read, H. Bordier and others) attribute to D'Aubigné *Le divorce satyrique ou les amours de la reyne Marguerite* on the strength of four commonplace lines which occur in it and also in his *Printemps*. But the lines might easily have come to the knowledge of the writer of the pamphlet, the style of which with its long, cumbrous sentences seems to me decisive against D'Aubigné's authority. MM. Réaume and Caussade print it under protest (II. 653 ff.); see the former's *Étude*, p. 100.

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CHAPTER XXVII

THE YEARS OF TRANSITION

THE entry of Henry IV into his capital on March 22, 1594, followed by his conversion, and by his absolution in the following year, led to the rapid submission of the rebellious nobles and the final pacification of the kingdom. When the Edict of Nantes (April 15, 1598) had secured for the Protestants as much toleration as it was possible to grant them, and the Peace of Vervins (May 2, 1598) had raised France once more to a footing of equality with Spain, it became possible for Henry and Sully to take in hand one of the most arduous tasks that had ever fallen to a king and his minister—the restoration of order and prosperity to a kingdom impoverished by nearly forty years of civil war and misgovernment. The new social and political conditions of the country naturally reacted upon its literature. As a consequence the eleven years from the publication of the *Satire Ménippée* (1594) to the arrival of Malherbe at Paris (1605) may be regarded as a period of transition during which French literature, without consciously breaking from the traditions of the Renaissance, acquires certain well-defined characteristics which herald the approach of a new era.

The first characteristic is best expressed in the words of M. Lanson[1], *La littérature, comme la France, se repose.* There

[1] I had determined to devote a separate chapter to this period of transition before reading M. Lanson's book, but I must acknowledge my debt to his admirable treatment of it, especially on pp. 343–345. Of the writers dealt with by M. Lanson under this period I have already discussed Vauquelin de la Fresnaye and Montchrestien, while I prefer to leave Regnier for another chapter. There remains François de Sales, whose style has certain sixteenth-century characteristics; but it

is an end to the lofty ambitions of the early days of the Pleiad; writers are now content with lesser aims and more tranquil emotions. Order and peace in literature reflect the restoration of order and peace in the state. Bertaut's poetry shines with a mild and equable radiance: even in his young days he seemed to Ronsard to be too *sage* for a poet[1]. Charron systematises Montaigne, the most unsystematic of philosophers[2]. A second characteristic is a further increase of that seriousness of purpose which I have already noticed. Charron and Du Vair are professed moralists; the official poems of Bertaut and Du Perron are written in a grave moralising spirit, far removed from the fantastic tone of Ronsard's court eclogues and masquerades, or from the gay frivolity of Desportes's songs. On the other hand both poetry and prose are marked by a colder sensibility and a less fertile imagination. These qualities are giving place to reason, to that reason which was to reign paramount in French literature for two centuries.

Throughout this period of transition Desportes was still acknowledged as Ronsard's successor on the throne of Parnassus, but he had ceased to write. The working head, the official laureate, pending the appearance on the scene of François Malherbe, was Jean Bertaut, the son of a professor at the University of Caen[3]. After serving as tutor in the family of the Maréchal de Matignon he was appointed in 1575, chiefly on the recommendation of Desportes, tutor to the Comte d'Auvergne (afterwards the Duc d'Angoulême), the natural son of Charles IX and Marie Touchet. This brought him to the Court, and soon afterwards he also received the appointment of reader to the king and secretary to his

would be difficult to treat him satisfactorily without going into the whole question of the religious revival. Moreover his *Introduction à la vie dévote* was not published till the year 1608. I shall therefore omit him altogether from my survey.

[1] Regnier, *Sat.* v.

[2] "*Quand Charron écrit, une autre ère a déjà commencé, l'effort universel des esprits tend à tout mettre en ordre, Henri IV règne, le scepticisme lui-même cherche une discipline.*" G. Guizot, *Montaigne*, p. 175.

[3] b. at Donnay, 1552—d. 1611. His father went to live at Caen, when he was in his second year (Grente, p. 2).

chamber. In 1576 he was joined by his friend and fellow-Norman, Jacques Davy du Perron[1].

The two Normans became in their different ways as complete courtiers as Desportes himself, though the energetic and pushing Du Perron soon outstripped his more cautious and retiring companion. When Ronsard died in 1585 Du Perron delivered a funeral oration and Bertaut wrote a long panegyrical poem. During the next ten years every notable death at the French court was the occasion for a poem from the friendly rivals. Joyeuse, Catharine de' Medici, and Henry III all received in turn their tribute of song, the last being mourned with the sincerity of placemen who have lost their benefactor. Both rallied to Henry IV and both, according to the measure of their talents, helped to smooth the path for his conversion. They were duly rewarded for these services, Du Perron with the bishopric of Evreux, and Bertaut with the Abbey of Aunay in the diocese of Bayeux[2]. But while Du Perron was henceforth too much occupied with public affairs to have leisure for poetry[3], Bertaut, who was not yet in orders, continued to follow his original calling. His poem on the death of Gabrielle d'Estrées was one of his most famous productions, and it is indeed impossible to admire too highly the skill with which the poet has found means to conciliate every conflicting interest and emotion.

> Par nos feux qui brusloient d'vne flame si pure,
> Et par ta propre foy, ie te prie et coniure
> De ne plus engager la saincte liberté
> Que ma mort t'a renduë, à nulle autre beauté,
> Qu'à celle que les dieux t'ont desja destinee
> Pour attacher ton cœur des chaisnes d'Hymenee.
> Accorde moy ce bien pour comble de mes vœux
> Que ie sois la derniere, apres tant d'autres nœuds,
> Qui t'aye estreint des laqs dont la beauté nous presse
> Au volontaire joug d'vne simple maistresse[4].

[1] b. at Saint-Lô, 1556—d. 1618.

[2] Du Perron was appointed in 1593, and Bertaut in 1594.

[3] He however translated after this date a portion of the *Æneid* and wrote a few sacred poems.

[4] *Œuvres*, p. 177.

The King's marriage with Marie de' Medici naturally demanded another official poem, and on this occasion Bertaut had a new rival in his fellow-townsman Malherbe[1]. In 1601 he published a collected edition of his graver poems, and this was followed a year later by a volume of love-poetry written in his youth and published without his name. The pervading tone of this latter volume is a gentle melancholy, which finds expression in the following stanzas, the best-known of all Bertaut's work:

Felicité passée
Qui ne peut revenir:
Tourment de ma pensée,
Que n'ay-je en te perdant perdu le souvenir!
Helas! il ne me reste
De mes contentements
Qu'un souvenir funeste,
Qui me les conuertit à toute heure en tourments[2].

If these lines remind one of Dante, the following recall a well-known passage in Shakespeare:

On ne se souvient que du mal,
L'ingratitude règne au monde:
L'injure se grave en métal,
Et le bien-fait s'escrit en l'onde.

The rest of the poem, however[3], and indeed the greater part of Bertaut's work, does not shew the same power of natural and concise expression. If his conceits are less fantastic than Desportes's, they are even more laboured and artificial. If he is a more careful writer than his contemporary,

[1] A good commentary on Bertaut's two poems is furnished by the following extracts from the letters of Henry IV:—April 15, 1599, to his sister, *La racine de mon amour est morte, elle ne rejettera plus.*—Oct. 5, 1599, to the Marquise de Verneuil, *Mon cœur, je vous aime si fort que je ne puis plus vivre absent de vous.*—Nov. 27, 1599, to Marie de' Medici, *Tenez vous saine et gaillarde, et assurée que je vous aime extrêmement. Sur cette verité, je vous baise cent mille fois.*—Oct. 4, 1601, to the Marquise de Verneuil, *Aimez-moi chèrement, et croyez ma fidélité inviolable pour vous, que je baise un million de fois.*

[2] *Œuvres*, p. 357. Cary, *op. cit.* p. 156, writing between 1821 and 1825, confirms what Sainte-Beuve says about the popularity of these lines at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

[3] *Defense de l'amour accusé par M. D. P.* (M. du Perron), *Œuvres*, 365.

he has none of his happy audacities. Perhaps the best complete poem in the volume is the first elegy. It has the merit of being short and it contains a comparison between two lovers and two palm-trees which, though not original, Sainte-Beuve pronounced to be Bertaut's only really fine passage:

On dit qu'en Idumee, és confins de Syrie,
Où bien souuent la palme au palmier se marie,
Il semble à regarder ces arbres bien-heureux
Qu'ils viuent animez d'vn esprit amoureux.
Car le masle courbé vers sa chere femelle
Monstre de ressentir le bien d'estre aupres d'elle:
Elle fait le semblable, et pour sentr'embrasser
On les voit leurs rameaux l'vn vers l'autre auancer
De ces embrassements leurs branches reuerdissent,
Le Ciel y prend plaisir, les astres les benissent:
Et l'haleine des vents souspirants à l'entour
Loüe en son doux murmure vne si saincte amour.
Que si l'impieté de quelque main barbare
Par le trenchant du fer ce beau couple separe,
Ou transplante autre-part leurs tiges desolez,
Les rendant pour iamais l'vn de l'autre exilez:
Iaunissants de l'ennuy que chacun d'eux endure
Ils font mourir le teint de leur belle verdure,
Ont en haine la vie, et pour leur aliment
N'attirent plus l'humeur du terrestre element[1].

The association of Bertaut with Desportes in Boileau's well-known line has led some critics to consider him chiefly as a disciple of that writer, but Boileau is historically far more correct when in his *Reflexions on Longinus* he joins him with Malherbe "as having caught in serious poetry the true note of the French language[2]." In fact Bertaut's official poems approximate in spirit much more closely to those of Malherbe than to those of Ronsard and Du Bellay. They shew the

[1] *Œuvres*, p. 381. Sainte-Beuve's separate chapter on Bertaut (*Tableau*, pp. 359 ff.) was written partly to modify the severe judgment which he had passed on him in the first edition of the *Tableau*. It is an excellent piece of criticism, but it leaves Bertaut much where he was.

[2] *Ayant attrapé dans le genre sérieux le vrai génie de la langue française. Réflexions sur Longin*, VII. (quoted by F. Brunetière in *L'évolution des genres*, p. 134).

same desire to improve the occasion and to escape from the atmosphere of mere panegyric into a higher one of general morality and public duty.

These official poems, of which the most important are funeral panegyrics, naturally find a place in the volume to which Bertaut put his name and which contains his later work from 1585 onwards. The rest of the volume testifies equally to the change which had come over the spirit of French poetry. It is composed of paraphrases of Psalms, a narrative poem entitled *Timandre*, a translation *un peu paraphrasée* of a book of the *Æneid*, and there are only twenty-seven sonnets. The serious tone of the volume is heightened by the prevailing use of the Alexandrine metre for the lyrical poems, another link between Bertaut and Malherbe[1]. Three stanzas from the paraphrase of Psalm CXLVIII. will give an idea of Bertaut's capacity for lofty and sonorous verse:

Heureux hostes du ciel, sainctes legions d'Anges,
Guerriers qui triomphez du vice surmonté,
Celebrez à iamais du Seigneur les loüanges,
Et d'vn hymne eternel honorez sa bonté.

. . . . . .

Orageux tourbillons qui portez les naufrages
Aux vagabonds vaisseaux des tremblants matelots,
Témoignez son pouuoir à ses moindres ouurages,
Semant par l'vniuers la grandeur de son los.
Faittes-la dire aux bois dont vos fronts se couronnent
Grands monts, qui comme Rois les plaines maistrisez:
Et vous humbles coustaux ou les pampres foisonnent,
Et vous ombreux vallons, de sources arrousez[2].

But after citing these stanzas one must add that it is only in occasional flights that Bertaut reaches so high a level. He has even less power than the generality of the poets of the Pleiad school to distinguish, at least in his own productions, between good and bad verse. When his inspiration deserts him he sinks to the flattest prose. On the other hand he is a

[1] The curious pamphlet, *Les Hermaphrodites*, written about 1600, contains a poem in stanzas of four Alexandrines.

[2] *Œuvres*, pp. 23, 24.

more careful writer than the majority of his school; he would have escaped from Malherbe's ruler with far fewer raps over the knuckles than Desportes did. Malherbe indeed spoke of him with a certain approval.

Finally he owes much less than his predecessors to Italian models, and when he does turn to Italy for inspiration it is neither to the Petrarchian school of Bembo nor to the fifteenth century *concettisti* and their later imitators, but to Tasso, whose *Gerusalemme liberata* and *Aminta* had appeared just before Bertaut's Muse began to assume a graver tone[1]. This beginning of Tasso's influence on non-dramatic poetry in France (we have already seen the stimulus given by the *Aminta* to pastoral drama) is worthy of attention. For Tasso was the chief Italian representative of the reaction from pagan to Christian sources of inspiration in poetry, and when France, restored to peace and order, had leisure to work out on her own lines a Catholic revival, his *Jerusalem delivered* became the model of numerous Christian epics. But apart from the tendencies of the age the Italian poet's gentle and melancholy temperament and his definitely Christian standpoint must have touched in Bertaut a sympathetic chord.

Thus Bertaut, alike in his preference for serious and national subjects, and in his comparative independence of foreign models, reproduces in poetry the same characteristics that we have noticed chiefly in the prose of our third period. Further the prosaic character of his verse when his inspiration deserts him is another premonition of the narrowing of the boundary line between verse and prose which was to take place under Malherbe's guidance. Yet the breath of inspiration still plays round Bertaut; in his hands the lamp of true poetry has not quite burned down[2].

It is not so with Du Perron. His poetry is of the head, not of the heart. Even his images spring from the intellect rather than from the imagination. His language is

[1] See J. Vianey in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* XI. (1904), 161. The *Gerusalemme liberata* and the *Aminta* were published in 1581.

[2] Bertaut was appointed to the bishopric of Seez in Normandy in 1606; he died in 1611.

correct and his rhymes are rich; he is lucid and ingenious; but his well-turned verses leave the reader cold. In his own day he had an even greater reputation as a writer of prose than as a writer of verse, and he held a high rank as orator, rhetorician, and controversialist. His style varies with the character of his work. Thus in the *Bref traité de l'Eucharistie*, which he wrote for the conversion of M. de Sancy[1], it is simple and business-like even to baldness, while in his sermons and other oratorical discourses it is decked out with a display of learning and metaphor not always in good taste. But it is perhaps in the *Traité de l'Eloquence*[2] that we find his most characteristic style. It is the work of a rhetorician who is not averse to empty commonplace, but it is not badly written. The somewhat long sentences and the redundant language, modelled on Cicero[3], are sixteenth-century features, but the well-balanced periods, the clear and logical reasoning, and the absence of metaphor point forward to seventeenth-century prose. Yet if one compares Du Perron even with Jean Guez de Balzac one sees a marked inferiority in the workmanship, and one realises that though Balzac's first collection of letters appeared only six years after Du Perron's death (1618), French prose had still much to learn in its passage from Montaigne to Pascal.

The most famous controversy in which Du Perron was engaged was that with Philippe Du Plessis-Mornay[4], the "Pope of the Huguenots," at Fontainebleau on the subject of the latter's book on the Eucharist[5]. The vanquished in that controversy is one of the noblest figures of his age, but though he wrote, or perhaps rather because he wrote, enough to fill forty stout volumes, he has only attained to a place on the outskirts of French literature. Yet besides the *Vindiciae*

[1] *Les diverses Œuvres*, 3rd ed. 1633, pp. 846 ff.; and see *ante*, p. 251.

[2] *ib.* 759 ff.

[3] Du Perron translated Cicero's first Verrine Oration.

[4] b. 1549, d. 1623.

[5] See Feret, 2nd ed., pp. 150 ff. and, on the opposite side, M. Pattison, *Isaac Casaubon*, 2nd ed. 1892, pp. 137 ff., 1875; also P. de l'Estoile, *Journal* VII. 225—227; 364—376. The conference took place on May 4, 1600.

contra tyrannos which, as we have seen, is almost certainly to be regarded as his work, one of his treatises, *De la vérité de la religion chrestienne*, deserves at least a passing mention[1]. Begun, though not completed, before the publication of the first edition of Montaigne's *Essais*, it is, like the work of Raymond Sebond, an attempt to establish the truth of Christianity on the basis of reason. An examination of its arguments belongs to the history of Christian Apologetic, but two general features may be noticed here. First, the learning, which ranges over a wide extent of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin literature, is remarkable in an author who was only thirty-two when his work was published and who for the last five years had been actively employed in the service of the King of Navarre. But we are told that from the age of fourteen to that of eighteen he worked fourteen hours a day, and his learning, though multifarious, was doubtless uncritical. Secondly, the style is essentially that of the Protestant school. Built on a solid framework of dialectic, it is clear, concise, and somewhat austere. Like D'Aubigné, Mornay seems to have been a student of Tacitus, for in the interesting letter to Louise de Coligny, to which I called attention in a former chapter, he advises that her son should learn from Tacitus to compress (*serrer*) his words and sentences[2]. But the writer of

[1] *Contre les Athées, Epicuriens, Payens, Juifs, Mahumedistes, et autres Infideles*: par Philippes de Mornay, Sieur du Plessis Marly, Antwerp, 1581; 2nd ed. *ib.* 1582 and two other editions of the same year; 1583; 1585. Mornay's friend, Sir Philip Sidney, began an English translation, which was completed by Arthur Golding and published in 1587, and a Latin translation by the author himself appeared in the same year. There are some good remarks on the work in Sayous II. 192 ff. (2nd ed. 1881).

[2] *Ante*, p. 164, n. 5. Mornay's letters, state-papers, and other short writings are collected in *Mémoires de P. de Mornay*, I. and II., La Forest (his own *château*) 1624–5, III. and IV., Amsterdam, 1651–2, and in *Mémoires et correspondance*, 12 vols., edd. Vaudoré and Auguis, 1824–5 (full of mistakes and incomplete). The *Histoire de la vie de P. de Mornay*, Leyden, 1647, was written by David de Licques, a gentleman of his household. It was based, down to 1606, on M^me^ de Mornay's manuscript. Licques himself died in 1616 and the work was completed by another hand (Haag, *La France Protestante*). There is a modern French life by Joachim Ambert, a cavalry officer, 1847, and an English one by the Rev. R. B. Hone, 1834. Some of

state-papers for the King of Navarre must also have had an excellent practical training in the art of writing clearly and in the fewest possible terms. But neither by the style nor by the substance of his writings, and still less by the date of their publication, can Mornay be said to be a representative of the period of transition. He comes in here rather as a link between Du Perron and Charron, whose first work was in part a somewhat belated answer to Mornay's *Traité de l'Église* published in 1578.

It appeared in 1593, when the writer[1] was over fifty, under the title of *Les trois vérités*. Only the third Truth or Book is an answer to Du Plessis-Mornay, but it is considerably the longest, forming two-thirds of the whole treatise. It appeared at an opportune moment and may well have had its share in persuading the subjects of Henry IV to follow his example in abjuring Protestantism. For Charron puts the case for Roman Catholicism clearly and effectively, dwelling on its advantages in point of antiquity, continuity, and unity, and on the superiority of the Church to the Scriptures as a final court of appeal. The first and second Truths treat respectively of religion and Christianity, but only in an abridged and summary fashion, and it is difficult to imagine anything less convincing. Religion, according to Charron, is a safe, comfortable, and useful thing, a line of argument which might commend itself to canons and other church dignitaries, but which was hardly calculated to bring conviction to honest doubters[2].

The whole treatise is a close reflexion of its author, of his love of system and order, his oratorical training, his clear but shallow intellect, his impressionable and impulsive temperament, his lack of humour and imagination, his blundering rashness. Blue-eyed, red-faced, with white hair and beard, short and stout, one can easily picture the man. The son of

Mornay's letters are given in Crépet's *Le trésor epistolaire de la France*; he writes well and forcibly, but he has neither the natural gift for expression which makes a good letter writer nor the acquired art which sometimes serves as its substitute.

[1] Pierre Charron, b. 1541—d. 1603.

[2] For a fuller and more appreciative account of *Les trois vérités* see Owen, *The Skeptics of the French Renaissance*, pp. 571—575.

a Paris bookseller, one of twenty-five brothers and sisters, he had first adopted the law as a profession. But changing his mind he took orders, and acquired an enormous reputation as a preacher. About the year 1585 he made the acquaintance of Montaigne, and before long became an enthusiastic admirer of both the man and the *Essays*. At the close of 1588 he was suddenly seized with a desire to become a monk, but being refused admittance first by the Carthusians and then by the Celestines he fell back on the society of Montaigne and the delights of authorship. The only one of his books which retained its popularity for any length of time was *La Sagesse*. It was written at Cahors, where he held the post of theological lecturer to the chapter, during the years 1597 and 1598, and was published in the summer of 1601 by Simon Millanges, the well-known Bordeaux printer. Charron had by this time moved to Condom, that obscure Gascon see which is associated with the name of Bossuet. He had for some time held the post of precentor, and the chapter now conferred on him the theological lectureship with a canonry attached. He bought a house, rebuilt it and furnished it handsomely, intending to live *plus joyeusement et gaillardement*.

The sceptical character of *La Sagesse* aroused a good deal of opposition. Thereupon Charron, wishing to procure the formal approbation of the Sorbonne for his book, made certain corrections and additions, and wrote a new preface explaining his position. In the autumn of 1603 he went to Paris, where, on the 16th of November, he was seized with an apoplectic fit in the street, and died on the spot. He died, as Montaigne is said to have done, in an attitude of prayer. The revised edition of *La Sagesse* appeared in the following year (1604) with the permission of the Privy Council[1]. Though certain objectionable passages were removed or modified the general character of the book remained the same.

In his preface to the original edition Charron makes a statement which it is well to bear in mind at the outset. "I here add two or three words of good faith, one that I have

[1] The third edition (1607) returned to the original text, as also did the four Elzevir editions, and a Paris edition of 1663.

gone begging in all directions (*que jay questé par cy par là*) and have taken the greater part of the materials for this work from the best authors who have treated this subject of morals and politics, which is the true science of man, as well ancient, especially the great doctors Seneca and Plutarch, as modern. I have collected here part of my studies: the form and the order are my own....What I have borrowed from others I have put in their own words, not being able to express it better." These words are literally true. Charron has taken his political philosophy from Bodin and Lipsius, his psychology and his moral philosophy from Seneca and Du Vair, and above all his scepticism from Montaigne; and in the case of the French writers he often copies them almost word for word[1]. It must be remembered that the posthumous edition of the *Essays* had been published only two years before he began to write his book, and that doubtless, as a close friend of Montaigne, he had re-read the *Essays* in their amplified form with renewed admiration. This would account in a man of his impulsive and uncritical temperament for the deep impression which Montaigne's views appear to have now made on him compared with the comparatively few traces of their influence that we find in *Les trois Vérités*.

The object of *La Sagesse* is to teach man to *se bien connaître, bien vivre et bien mourir*, which according to Montaigne is the aim of all education and instruction[2]. The First book[3] accordingly begins with what is meant to be a complete physiological and psychological account of man, of which the most important part, the psychology, is mainly borrowed, often word for word, from Du Vair's *La philosophie morale des Stoïques*[4]. This is followed by a more general consideration of man, firstly in comparison with other animals, secondly in his life, and thirdly in his morals, the whole of this

[1] See A. Delboulle, *Charron plagiaire de Montaigne* in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* VII. (1900), pp. 284 ff.

[2] *Essais*, I. XXV.

[3] *Le premier livre enseigne à se cognoistre et l'humaine condition, qui est le fondement de Sagesse.*

[4] cc. 18—33; cc. 15 and 16 are from Du Vair's *Traité de la Constance.*

part being a *réchauffé* of Montaigne's tirades on the vanity of human nature in a highly dogmatic and exaggerated form[1]. Man emerges from Charron's hands lower than the beasts; vain, inconstant, incapable of attaining either to virtue or to truth, steeped in misery, and, worst of all, with a presumptuous belief in himself as the centre of the universe. Never was the vanity of human nature proclaimed in such tones of arrogant and uncompromising assertion as by this professor of scepticism. The rest of the First book is occupied with an account of man as a social and political being, for which Charron is largely indebted to Bodin.

It will thus be seen that the words of the preface, quoted above, are in strict accordance with the facts. The only original feature of the first book is "the form and the order," and for this Charron is entitled to some credit. If M. Bonnefon's remark that "he has an instinct for psychology" is too favourable, since his psychology is mostly borrowed, it may be said with perfect truth that he has an instinct for classification. He revels in divisions and subdivisions and tabulated statements[2], which is all the more remarkable in an ardent admirer of Montaigne, and in one who grew up to manhood in an age when method and order were the last things with which writers concerned themselves.

The Second book of *La Sagesse* is at once the shortest and the most interesting. Having shewn what man is, Charron now proceeds to guide him on the path to Wisdom. He must first free himself from all vices and passions, from all popular errors and prejudices, and thus acquire complete liberty both of judgment and will. He will then be ready, like a clean sheet of paper, to receive the impressions of Wisdom. Now the principal and essential part of Wisdom is *prud'homie* or probity, and true *prud'homie* consists in following nature, which is the first and fundamental law of God. "Men are naturally good." But Charron has already told us at great length that men are naturally bad, and that they are incapable of virtue or knowledge! How does he reconcile this glaring

[1] cc. 34—40.

[2] *Des divisions de Charron qui attristent et ennuient.* Pascal, *Pensées.*

contradiction? As we have seen, the same contradiction is practically to be found in Montaigne, who writes with equal eloquence on the vanity of man and on the excellence of nature and reason. But Montaigne never dreamt of giving to the world a complete system of philosophy and did not in the least mind being inconsistent. He wrote as his fancy prompted him, now as a sceptic, now as an admirer of Stoic morality. But when his "vagabond" thoughts are arranged and classified, when they are repeated with the exaggeration of a rhetorician and the dogmatism of a preacher, then the inconsistencies assume a different aspect. Had Charron contented himself with constructing on Stoic lines a system of positive morality independent of revealed religion he might have deserved all the praise which some writers bestow on him. But before proceeding to build he carefully undermined his foundations, and the result is an edifice, of fair proportions indeed, but tottering to its fall.

The Third book treats of the four cardinal virtues, and a good deal of it is mere repetition of what has gone before. One of the chapters deals with education but is little more than an orderly arrangement of Montaigne's fruitful but somewhat disconnected ideas. It is characteristic of the distorted and exaggerated form that Charron gives to his master's utterances that he says, that learning and wisdom are as a rule incompatible, and that with very few exceptions a learned man is never wise and a wise man never learned[1]. Charron's style is clear, logical, and fairly expressive. But it is emphatically the style of a trained rhetorician, verbose and diffuse, somewhat monotonous, and with little or no charm.

It has been not unnaturally asked whether this dignitary of the Church and successful preacher, who published in the same year as *De la Sagesse* a volume of sermons entitled *Discours chrestiens*, was a traitor within the Christian camp or a blunderer who did not comprehend the drift of his own

[1] III. c. xiv. § 14. Another characteristic of the difference between Charron and his master is the inscription which he put over the door of his house at Condom—*Je ne sçay*, instead of *Que sçay-je?*

book. I believe the latter to be the true explanation. In spite of the reckless and all-embracing scepticism of *De la Sagesse*, there are passages in it which shew that Charron was at heart an orthodox Christian[1]. Though in writing his book he was partly prompted by a foolish ambition to pose as an *esprit fort*, he had also another motive, which in itself was most praiseworthy. This was to provide a system of moral conduct for those persons who either disbelieved in revealed religion altogether, or regarded it as having no concern with conduct and morality. For the divorce between religion and morality was, as Charron saw, the crying evil of the day, the very root of the rottenness and moral decay which were eating out the heart of France. Probity without religion, and religion without probity, are, he declared, alike insufficient. But his proposed remedy is characteristic of his want of real insight. Instead of pointing out that the Christian religion is concerned with conduct, and that the true Christian must necessarily be an honest man and a good citizen, he maintains that piety and probity, religion and *prud'homie* belong to wholly different spheres, and that, though these must be united, they must not be confused[2]. First acquire probity and then add to this the grace of piety. First become a honest man and then become a Christian. Moreover this attempt to construct a moral code on Stoic lines independently of revealed religion and of the rewards and punishments of a future life was, however praiseworthy, not original, for it had been already made by Du Vair.

It was the sceptical side of Charron's book which gave it popularity, and made it as great a favourite as the *Essays* with the sceptics of the next generation, with La Mothe le Vayer and Gassendi, with Saint-Evremond and Ninon de Lenclos. But the era of orthodoxy which began with the personal government of Louis XIV was fatal to Charron's reputation, and no edition of *De la Sagesse* was published between 1663 and 1769[2]. In England his fame was of longer

[1] As for instance liv. II. c. iii. §§ 21, 22, where he treats of repentance in a much more Christian spirit than Montaigne.

[2] II. c. v. §§ 25—28.

duration, and he found favour alike with orthodox and sceptic. A future Dean of Canterbury, George Stanhope, translated *De la Sagesse*[1]; Bolingbroke often refers to him; while Pope, doubtless on the authority of Bolingbroke, couples in his verse Montaigne with "more sage Charron." It was however left to Buckle in the nineteenth century to proclaim in sober prose that "on the most important subjects Charron was a bolder and deeper thinker than Montaigne[2]."

Guillaume du Vair[3], to whom Charron was indebted for some of his borrowed plumes, is, at any rate from the historical point of view, the most important writer of this period of transition. On the one hand he touches Pasquier, La Noue, and the *Satire Ménippée*, on the other Malherbe, St François de Sales, Balzac, and Descartes. On Malherbe indeed, with whom he was intimate when they were both living at Aix in Provence, he exercised, as M. Brunot has shewn, an appreciable influence. He was born in 1556, and having adopted, first an ecclesiastical, and then a legal career, was appointed in 1584 a councillor of the Paris Parliament. On the death of Henry III he was compelled to stay in Paris by the paralytic condition of his father. Siding at first with the moderate or national section of the Leaguers he before long joined the party of the *Politiques*. As one of the deputies for Paris at the Estates of 1593 he protested against the proposal of the Spanish Leaguers to violate the Salic law by conferring the crown on the Spanish Infanta, and a few days later the Parliament of Paris passed, on his initiative, a resolution in favour of maintaining that law. It was on this occasion that he delivered his most famous speech.

His principal writings all belong to this dark period of

[1] 3 vols. 1697. Stanhope was a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and like Charron a successful preacher. There is an older translation by Samson Lennard, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney, who was with him at the battle of Zutphen.

[2] *History of Civilisation in England*, I. 475 ff. M. Stapfer (pp. 317—321) points out that the passage which Buckle adduces as evidence of Charron's superiority is borrowed from Bodin.

[3] b. 1556—d. 1621.

his country's fortunes when it came near to becoming a dependence of Spain. Thus they are all more or less inspired by a sense of the nation's peril. His earliest treatises are little more than attempts to find in literature and philosophy a distraction from the public ills, but his later ones have a definite message of hope and encouragement for his countrymen. *La sainte philosophie*[1] belongs to the former class: the latter may be said to open with a translation of the *Enchiridion*, or manual, of Epictetus, *pour affermir nos esprits en un tel temps que cestuy-ci.* This was followed by *La philosophie morale des Stoïques*, based, for the most part, on the teaching of Epictetus, but coloured by the writer's own Christianity. In a notable passage he exhorts his readers to patriotism, saying that the love of country should come next to the love of God. The same note is struck in the *Exhortation à la vie civile*, a short treatise of a dozen pages addressed to a certain M. de L.[2], who contemplated retiring to a monastery in order to avert his gaze from the horrors of the civil wars and to spend the rest of his life in the service of God. From this course Du Vair strongly dissuades him, urging the claims of his unhappy country and the duty of not giving way to despair.

The same topic forms the governing idea of his longest and most important treatise, *De la constance et consolation es calamitez publiques.* Written apparently in September or October, 1590[3], it consists of three dialogues which the writer and three friends (whom he calls Musée, Orphée, and Linus) are supposed to have held during the siege of Paris[4]. The first dialogue contains an eloquent passage on the mutability of human things, and on the consequent decay which inevitably awaits all kingdoms and empires. Possibly, says the

[1] His earliest treatise, *Meditation sur sept Pseaumes*, is dedicated to M. de Breyé, Bishop of Meaux, who died in 1588. This was followed by *La sainte philosophie* (see prefatory epistle), dedicated to his father, who died in 1592.

[2] According to M. Cougny his name was Loménie.

[3] Christophe de Thou, who died on November 1, 1582, is referred to as having been dead nearly eight years. The treatise was not published, so far as we know, till 1594.

[4] April to end of August, 1590.

writer, France too is approaching the end of her term, but she has recovered from equally severe maladies, and there is great hope from the courage and the clemency of her lawful king, Henry IV. The second dialogue is of a more philosophical character, dealing with the difficult and still unsolved problems of necessity and free-will, of the Divine government of the world, of the existence of evil, and of the punishment of the innocent for the sins of their predecessors. The third dialogue opens with a criticism on those who make submission to providence a pretext for not attempting to stem public calamities; and this leads to an interesting apology on behalf of those who while opposed to the League and recognising Henry IV as their lawful monarch found themselves compelled by circumstances to remain in Paris. Finally, one of the speakers gives an account of the death of Christophe de Thou, the First President of the Paris Parliament and the father of the historian, putting into his mouth a remarkable discourse in which are to be found the germ of the Cartesian doctrine of intuitive knowledge and an eloquent demonstration of immortality based on the spiritual nature of the soul.

Du Vair's next treatise is of a totally different character, but it deals with a subject which his former writings shew that he was well qualified to treat. It was entitled *De l'éloquence françoise et des raisons et pourquoy elle est demeurée si basse*, and must have been written either in 1592 or early in 1593[1]. Du Vair assigns two reasons for the inferiority of French eloquence, the practice of interlarding speeches with quotations from classical writers, and the want of emotion on the part of the speakers. He recommends as essential studies for the orator dialectic, ethics, and psychology, but he considers the imitation of the finest speeches of antiquity more helpful than any manual of rhetoric. With this idea he has appended to his treatise translations of three famous

[1] It was written after the death of President Brisson (Sept. 1591), and before the conversion of Henry IV (July 1593), and was published, without the author's name, by Abel L'Angelier, before March 15, 1594 (Pasquier, *Lettres*, XV. 10). The earliest known edition is of 1595.

speeches, that of Demosthenes *On the Crown*, that of Æschines *Against Ctesiphon*, and that of Cicero *On behalf of Milo*.

Among the forensic speakers of Du Vair's own day the highest place was generally assigned to Guy du Faur de Pibrac[1]. But Du Vair says that his eloquence was marred by the common fault of making a display of erudition by long quotations from ancient authors. We learn from Estienne Pasquier in an interesting chapter of the *Recherches de la France*[2] that the originator of this practice was Christophe de Thou. There was no greater offender than his successor as First President, the great Achille de Harlay, and another offender, according to Du Vair, was Barnabé Brisson, the unfortunate President who was hung by the Sixteen.

The reputation of the above-mentioned speakers was chiefly gained on the Bench. Among those who adorned the Bar Du Vair mentions Pierre Versoris, who was celebrated for his speech on behalf of the Jesuits in their famous lawsuit with the University (1565)[3], Jacques Faye, seigneur d'Espesse, Claude Mangot, and his son Jacques[4]. But he says nothing either of Versoris's more famous opponent, Estienne Pasquier[5], or of Pasquier's friend, Antoine Loisel[6], who wrote an account of the contemporary Bar under the title of *Pasquier ou Dialogue des Advocats du Parlement de Paris*[7]. Nor does he mention Simon Marion, whose reputation stood perhaps highest of all. Cardinal du Perron declared that he believed him to be the greatest advocate since Cicero[8]. Another

[1] See *ante*, pp. 43—45.

[2] IV. c. 27 and cf. *Lettres*, VII. 12.

[3] His real name was Le Tourneur.

[4] Cf. Pasquier, *Recherches*, *loc. cit.*

[5] See A. Douarche, *L'Université de Paris et les Jésuites*, 1888, pp. 77—88. Pasquier's speech is printed in his *Recherches*, book III. c. 44; and that of Versoris, though apparently only in a summary form, in the Amsterdam edition of Pasquier's *Œuvres*, I. 1102 ff.

[6] b. 1536—d. 1617.

[7] 1652; ed. Dupin *aîné* in Loisel's *Opuscules*, 1844.

[8] *Depuis Cicéron je crois qu'il n'y a pas eu d'avocat tel que lui*, cited by Sainte-Beuve, *Port-Royal*, 6th ed. I. 61.

advocate of high repute as a speaker was Marion's son-in-law, Antoine Arnaud, who made his reputation after the publication of Du Vair's treatise as counsel for the University of Paris in their second action against the Jesuits. His speech, which someone wittily called the original sin of the Arnaud family, is, like his pamphlet, the *Anti-Espagnol*[1], a passionate invective[2]. It contains several passages of bad taste, but this is a fault which Arnaud shares with nearly every writer of his age, and with the greatest speakers of all ages, with Demosthenes, Cicero, and Burke.

Of the two other branches of his subject, political and pulpit oratory, Du Vair practically says nothing. The latter, when he wrote his treatise, had sunk very low in the hands of the League preachers, who had made it a school of vulgar abuse and buffoonery. The only preacher at this time who had a reputation for serious eloquence was Pierre Charron, but none of his sermons have come down to us. After the final defeat of the League, pulpit oratory, which for nearly two centuries had been almost entirely neglected by the Catholic Church in France, began to be carefully cultivated. It was one of the signs of the approaching Catholic revival, and Du Perron, whose controversial powers we have seen exercised so actively on behalf of his Church, was also conspicuous as a preacher. Only two specimens of his actual sermons have survived[3], but the funeral panegyric on Ronsard already mentioned and a Spiritual discourse delivered before the King[4] may be classed under the same head. Though Du Perron's rhetorical merit is considerable his lack of genuine moral fervour prevents him from being really eloquent[5].

But this was the dawn of the greatest school of pulpit oratory that France, or even modern Europe, has ever seen. On the

[1] See *ante*, p. 232.

[2] *Plaidoyé de M. Antoine Arnauld*, 1594. See Douarche, *op. cit.* pp. 110—119, and for Arnauld generally, Froment, pp. 147—218; Sainte-Beuve, *op. cit.* I. 64 ff.

[3] *Œuvres*, 1633, 681 ff., and 694 ff.

[4] *ib.* 651 ff. and 553 ff.

[5] Bertaut was also of some repute as a preacher.

other hand political oratory in France was declining to a long night. In this branch of the art the two most distinguished names of the century were Michel de l'Hospital and Du Vair himself. The best speech of L'Hospital, so far as one can judge from somewhat imperfect reports, was his opening address as Chancellor at the Estates of St Germain in August, 1561, which contains the celebrated utterance that a man may be a citizen without being a Christian[1]. That with which he opened the Estates at Orleans in December, 1560, is longer and more ambitious, but on the whole inferior[2]. His faults are much the same as those of the forensic speakers of his day, display of classical learning, and a tendency to wander off into vague generalities instead of sticking to the argument. Du Vair is certainly a more effective speaker. If the speech which he delivered after the barricades of 1588 has the same fault of vagueness, and suffers also from over-elaboration, especially in the use of metaphor, his later speeches shew a marked improvement. The short one in which he protested against the admission of a Spanish garrison into Paris is excellent, and so is the longer and more famous one in defence of the Salic law. Du Vair has something of the breadth of tone, the largeness of utterance, and the fervent glow of his model Demosthenes, qualities which spring in both cases from a lofty and whole-hearted patriotism[3].

Henry IV recognised Du Vair's services by appointing him a Master of Requests and sending him, in the spring of 1596, on a mission to England, while later in the same year he entrusted him with the difficult task of pacifying Provence. Having done this successfully Du Vair was appointed in 1598 First President of the Parliament of Aix, where he resided till 1616, when Marie de' Medici, the Queen-mother, recalled him to Paris as Keeper of the Seals. He only held them on this occasion for five months, but after the murder of Concini in 1617 he was re-appointed by Louis XIII, who also

[1] *Œuvres*, ed. Dufey, I. 441—453.

[2] *ib.* 375—407.

[3] Du Vair's speeches were first published by L'Angelier in 1606 under the title of *Actions et traictez Oratoires*.

conferred on him the bishopric of Lisieux. He died in 1621.

Eloquence is at once Du Vair's chief merit as a writer and his stumbling-block. His finest passages are all eloquent in character; on the other hand he too often degenerates into declamation and commonplace. From the historical point of view his style is worth attention, for though he is neither a highly original thinker nor a writer of genius, he has something to say and can say it well, and he may therefore be taken as a good representative of this transitional period. While his language retains the vigour and picturesqueness of the sixteenth century, he writes clearly and lucidly, avoiding as a rule the long sentences which lead his predecessors astray. But compare him with Jean Guez de Balzac and one sees at once how far he falls short of the finished art of seventeenth-century prose. Of those qualities for which Balzac was especially admired, the careful choice of his words and phrases and the equilibrium and harmony of his periods, qualities which he was the first to introduce systematically into French prose, and which have ever since been its chief glory, there is hardly a trace in Du Vair. In the following passage we see him at his best:

Mais pource que les loix sans jugemens sont inutiles, et comme paroles mortes, il faut en tirer profit, clorre toutes nos iournees par une censure et examen de nos actions, les espluchans tous les soirs, pour voir ce qui en est conforme aux reigles que je vous ay proposees.....Si nous trouvons que tout aille comme il doit, et que tout y soit conforme à ces sainctes loix là, nous recevrons une secrette rejouyssance en nostre ame, que nous cueillirons comme le doux fruict de nostre innocence. Ce sera là, à mon advis, un cantique nocturne le plus melodieux, et le plus agreable que nous puissions chanter à Dieu.... Mais pource que la nature des choses crées porte par son infirmité que le bien dont Dieu les douë en leur naissance se define et consomme de soy mesme journellement, sinon qu'il soit continuellement reparé et soustenu par le flux ordinaire de sa bonté, et que nos forces ne seront pas suffisantes d'elles-mesmes à nous conserver en cette perfection, adjoustons à ce premier cantique un Epode et sacré enchantement, pour invoquer la divine faveur...luy disant: O Dieu tout bon, tout sage, et tout puissant,.....[1]

[1] Printed from a Paris edition, 12mo., 1618.

Two contemporaries of Du Vair who like him served Henry IV with diligence and distinction deserve honourable mention as having furthered the developement of French prose in the direction of lucidity and precision. "Cardinal d'Ossat[1] and President Jeannin[2]," wrote Lord Chesterfield to his son, "will not only inform your mind but form your style." But their writings consist solely of dispatches and state-papers, and, however much they may deserve the praise of having introduced into the language of diplomacy a grammatical correctness and logical precision hitherto unknown to it, they cannot be said—and it is no blame to them—to have imparted to their reports any special charm or individuality. Cardinal d'Ossat who played an important part in the negotiations with the Holy See consequent on the conversion of Henry IV was for some ten years the representative of France at the Vatican. His letters addressed to Villeroy, the Secretary of State, were published in 1624. The *Negotiations* of President Jeannin written in the two years, 1607–1609, during which he was employed in negotiating the truce—it was a peace in all but name—between the Netherlands and Spain, were not published till 1656, the year which saw the appearance of the first great monument of modern French prose, *Les lettres provinciales*. Even as writers of dispatches D'Ossat and Jeannin are hardly the equal of Du Vair, whose letters to Henry IV[3] are characterised by a straightforward brevity, not always present in his more ambitious efforts.

Of all the works which saw the light during this period of the reign of Henry IV none is more thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the monarch himself than the *Theatre d'Agriculture et Mesnage des Champs* of Olivier de Serres[4]. The statement in Scaliger's Table-talk that Henry had the book read to him for half an hour after dinner every day for three or four months may or may not be true, but he certainly gave it a hearty welcome; for it treated of an industry upon

[1] b. 1536—d. 1604. [2] b. 1540—d. 1622.

[3] M. Sapey prints thirty-one of these, together with eight addressed to other persons, including an admirable one to Villeroy on the subject of the *Satire Ménippée*.

[4] b. 1539—d. 1619.

which the regeneration of his kingdom largely depended and which the restoration of peace and order had made possible to take in hand with hope and energy. The writer was an elder brother of the historian, Jean de Serres, and like him a Protestant. During the greater part of the civil wars he had resided on his estate, which was a considerable one, at Le Pradel in the Vivarais[1], spending his time in its cultivation and in the study of books. He thus realised the project which Montaigne announced with such pomp, but which he carried out with only partial success. Like Montaigne he was a student of ancient literature, especially of Latin writers on agriculture and kindred subjects, Virgil, Pliny, Cato, Columella, and Palladius. Plutarch's Lives were also familiar to him, and he is fond of citing instances of Roman statesmen who, after the turmoil of war or politics, retired to the cultivation of their estates.

His book, to which he had given thirty years, was first published in 1600, and there were other editions in 1603, 1605, 1608 and 1623[2]. Its scope is much wider than that of an ordinary treatise on agriculture; it is in fact a complete manual of the management of a landed estate. It might fitly have been called *The country gentleman*, a pendant to Castiglione's *Courtier*. It not only embraces agriculture in its widest sense, including horticulture in all its forms, water-supply, and forestry, but it considers such questions as the management of servants and the duties of the mistress of the house. For an estate in those days was a self-contained kingdom and its ruler had to know something of everything. Thus one chapter contains recipes for every imaginable kind of preserve, while others are devoted to remedies, not only for all human diseases from the plague to corns, but for those of every animal on the estate. Thus if De Serres's book is chiefly of a technical character, it embraces at any rate a considerable variety of topics, some of which are of fairly general interest. For the student of social life it offers a most instructive picture of rural France at that period, while

[1] It is near Villeneuve de Berg.

[2] The chapter on silkworms (book v. c. xx) was published separately in 1599.

underlying the whole there is a substratum of human emotion, which occasionally finds its way to the surface, especially in the first and last books.

The orderly arrangement of the topics reminds one of *De la Sagesse*, and each book is preceded by a classification of the chapters worthy of Charron himself. The style is unaffected and exceedingly lucid, but without any of the aridity which one associates with the writers of Calvin's school. De Serres, in fact, though a Protestant, belongs rather to the school of Rabelais; his syntax is somewhat archaic, his language rich and coloured by poetical feeling. The following passage will give a good idea, not only of his style, but of the nature of his book, and of the character of the man who, in the words of Arthur Young, was 'the great parent of French agriculture':

A corriger la solitude de la campaigne est de grande efficace la lecture des bons livres, vous tenant tous-jours compagnie. Scipion l'Africain en rend tesmoignage, disant à ses amis (qui s'esbahissoient de sa vie privee et retiree) *n'estre jamais moins seul, que quand il estoit seul.* Si que le Gentil-homme aimant les livres, ne pourra estre que bien à son aise, avec un livre au poing se promenant par ses jardins, ses prairies, ses bois, tenant l'œil sur ses gens et affaires. En mauvais temps de froidures et de pluies, estans dans la maison, se promenera sous la guide de ses livres, par la terre, par la mer, par les Royaumes et provinces plus loingtaines, aiant les cartes devant ses yeux, lui monstrant à l'œil leurs situations. Dans l'histoire, contemplera les choses passees, les guerres, les batailles, la vie et les mœurs des Rois et Princes, pour imiter les bons et fuir les mauvais. Remarquera les gouvernemens des peuples, leurs loix, leurs polices, leurs coustumes, tant pour entendre comme le monde se gouverne, que pour faire profit des salutaires avis qu'il en pourra tirer, les appropriant à ses usages. Des bons livres, il apprendra à sagement conduire sa famille, à se comporter avec ses voisins: sur tout à craindre et servir Dieu, à bien vivre, à fuir le vice, suivre la vertu, qui est le chemin du ciel, nostre seure demeure.

. . . . . .

Moiennant ces belles et nobles qualités, nostre vertueux pere de famille se maintiendra gaiement en son mesnage, y vivra accomodément, fera bonne chere à ses amis. Et despartant à propos ses heures, pourvoira à ses affaires, si bien que mariant le profit avec le plaisir, chose aucune n'en demeurera en arriere, ains, comme en se jouant, toutes s'avanceront à son contentement et honneur, Dieu benissant son labeur et industrie[1].

[1] *Œuvres*, 1605, pp. 989 f.

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TO BE CONSULTED.

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CHAPTER XXVIII

REGNIER

THERE remains Mathurin Regnier, who, though he published nothing until after the close of the limits assigned to this history, belongs, like D'Aubigné, emphatically to the sixteenth century. M. Vianey, indeed, speaks of him as "the most important of our poets of transition"; but in all those characteristics which depend on training and influence rather than on individual temperament Regnier belongs not so much to the transitional period as to the Renaissance itself[1]. It was not merely because he happened to be Desportes's nephew that he opposed the reforms of Malherbe, it was because his poetical education, his many visits to Italy, his natural dislike of all change,

En toute opinion je fuy la nouveauté,

made him a thorough-going disciple of the Pleiad. Like his masters, he pillages the Italians, like them he is indifferent to the virtues of order and artistic construction, like them he is without the faculty of self-criticism, like them he writes in a language which is habitually metaphorical and picturesque, and like them he is firmly convinced that poetry is an affair not of the reason but of the imagination. It is true that he is a popular instead of a courtly poet, and that he has a gift for realistic description shared by no other follower of the Pleiad, except possibly Remy Belleau; but these are the fruits of his individual genius, and they have no connexion

[1] While differing from M. Vianey on this point, I must acknowledge my great debt to his book.

with the prosaic and positive view of life upon which Malherbe prided himself[1].

Little is known of Regnier's life, and that little is not greatly to his credit. Born at Chartres in 1573 he was younger by seventeen years than the youngest of the writers noticed in the last chapter. His father, Jacques Regnier, was an alderman of his native town[2], and his mother, Simone Desportes, was a sister of the poet. At the age of nine he received the tonsure, and when he was quite young—the date is uncertain[3]—he was attached to the suite of the Cardinal de Joyeuse, who had succeeded the Cardinal of Ferrara as Protector of France at the Court of Rome, and whose restless activity and strict life were far from acceptable to his indolent and pleasure-loving follower. Regnier accompanied him to Rome and led a more or less wandering life in his service, of which a considerable period was spent in Italy. He also passed some time at Toulouse, of which see Joyeuse was archbishop. But in the year 1605 he returned from his last journey to Italy[4] and definitely settled in Paris, where with many other men of letters he enjoyed the patronage and hospitality of his uncle, Desportes. He looked forward to succeeding him in one of his four fat abbeys, but in this he was disappointed, for on his death in 1606 they were given, with one exception, to the King's son by Henriette d'Entragues, then in his sixth year. The poet's sole recompense for his tonsure and his long servitude was a pension of 2000 *livres* and a canonry at Chartres, which was conferred on him in 1609. He died at Rouen in October, 1613, two months before his fortieth birthday.

[1] Petit de Julleville's view of the relations of Regnier and Malherbe seems to me far juster than that of M. Vianey. Comp. Petit de J. IV. p. 32 with Vianey, pp. 169 ff. Between the realism of a grammarian and the realism of an observer of life there is all the difference in the world.

[2] The fact that he built a tennis-court (*tripot*) in his garden led to the story that he was a *tripotier* or keeper of a public tennis-court. A good deal of scandal soon accumulated round the poet's name.

[3] See the note at the end of this chapter.

[4] Joyeuse returned from Rome in May, 1605, and Regnier doubtless accompanied him. It is a mistake to suppose that he was ever secretary to Sully's brother, M. de Béthune, to whom Satire vi is dedicated.

It is by his Satires that Regnier lives. His other poetry is small in amount and comparatively unimportant. Yet the first half of the Stanzas, beginning *Quand sur moy je jette les yeux*[1], though visibly inspired by Desportes, an Ode, *Jamais ne pourray-je bannir*, and a *Plainte*[2], with its original and elaborate arrangement of metre, suggest that had he fallen on days more favourable to lyric poetry, he might have written lyrics distinguished by strength and sincerity of emotion, and by a note of plaintive melancholy. But it is Regnier the satirist, the creator of French satire, who demands our attention.

In French mediæval literature there is plenty of satirical writing, but no formal satire, nothing which calls itself by that name. In Marot's hands, as we have seen, it took the curious unliterary, almost doggerel, form of the *du coq a l'asne*, which Sibilet regarded as pure French satire, and which Du Bellay treated with not unmerited contempt. If poets must be satirical, says Du Bellay, let them take the Satires of Horace for their model. Yet he himself, as so often happened to him, did not practise what he preached. His first models in satire were the Italians. Now Italian satire of the time of the Renaissance took two forms, one of which, being of purely classical origin, arrogated to itself the name of Satire, while the other was generally called Burlesque. Both alike were written in *terza rima*, but for Burlesque the sonnet form, either with or without a *coda*, was also employed. The creator of the Satire proper is said to have been Vinciguerra, but by far its greatest exponent was Ariosto[3]. After him, at a considerable distance, come Alamanni, Bentivoglio, Nelli, and Francesco Sansovino. The last, a son of the great Venetian architect, published in 1560 the collected satires of all these writers, as well as of some others, which proved of great

[1] *Œuvres*, ed. Courbet, p. 211, first printed in the Elzevir edition of 1652. Cf. Desportes, *Œuvres*, p. 493.

[2] *Œuvres*, p. 173 and p. 167, both first printed in 1611 in a volume entitled *Temple d'Apollon*, and first assigned to Regnier in the Elzevir edition of 1642.

[3] Vinciguerra's satires were first published in 1527, Alamanni's in 1532, Ariosto's in 1534. Alamanni's satires are chiefly political and shew the influence of Dante and Juvenal.

service to French imitators. Ariosto's model was Horace, but Horace as represented by a single satire, the sixth of the First book, the only one which is at once an epistle in form and autobiographical in character[1]. In fact Ariosto's satires, as well in spirit as in form, are familiar epistles rather than true satires. In the first place they lack the dramatic form which Horace, mindful of the origin of Roman satire, has given to the whole of his Second book, except the opening of the Sixth satire, and has largely introduced even in his First book[2]. Secondly Ariosto's satirical intention, which, like Horace's in his Second book, never exceeds the measure of good-natured irony, is always subservient to his charming faculty of self-revelation. As De Sanctis says, his aim is neither ridicule nor censure, but the relief of his own mind.

On the other hand Burlesque gives us that side of Horace's work which is represented by the Dinner of Nasidienus (II. 8) and the Journey to Brundisium (I. 5). Not that Burlesque is classical in its origin, for it is derived partly from the popular sonnets of the Florentine barber, Burchiello, and partly from Lorenzo de' Medici's *Simposio* or *Beoni*, a parody of the *Divina Commedia*, written in *terza rima* and divided into *capitoli*. It is from this latter fact that the name of *capitolo* was specially given to a burlesque poem. The past master of this kind of poetry was Berni, and Bernesque was used as an equivalent to Burlesque[3]. Next to him ranks Mauro, and there were many others, chiefly men who had

[1] Mr Mackail's remark in his *Latin Literature* that "the *Satires* are full from end to end of himself and his own affairs" is an exaggeration.

[2] In the MSS. of Horace the satires and epistles are alike entitled *sermones*, but he uses the word *satura* in two places. *Sermo* merely denotes a familiar style, more akin to prose than to poetry. The oldest meaning of *satura*, so far as the evidence goes, is that of a medley of metres, or of prose and verse. But Nettleship conjectured that its original meaning, before it was applied to a literary composition, was "a dramatic performance or story which was a medley of scenes or incidents" (H. Nettleship, *The original form of Roman satura*, 1878). The earliest literary form which *satura* took is probably best represented by the work of Petronius.

[3] Il Lasca published in 1548 a collected edition of *opere burlesche* of Berni and others. Both forms of Italian satire are included in vol. XXVII. of *Parnaso Italiano*, Venice, 1787.

distinguished themselves in other branches of literature, such as the novelists Firenzuola and Il Lasca, Annibale Caro, the translator of the *Æneid*, and Della Casa, the letter-writer.

As we have seen, it was Ariosto and Berni who inspired Joachim du Bellay with the idea of his *Regrets*, Ariosto suggesting the autobiographical character and Berni the use of the sonnet-form. Then in 1559, the year after the publication of the *Regrets*, he produced in *Le poëte courtisan* a poem which may fairly claim to be the first French satire. But in its elaborate irony, its studied art of saying one thing and meaning another, it still reminds one, not of Horace, but of a *capitolo*[1]. We have seen that Ronsard's *Discours des misères de ce temps* contain some satirical passages, and a certain amount of autobiography. This latter characteristic is made the special feature of another *discours*, *Contre fortune*, and of two poems addressed to Pierre Lescot and to Catharine de' Medici[2]. But they are epistles and not satires, and so Ronsard regarded them. In a poem which he addressed to Henry III soon after his accession to the throne, he announces his intention of writing satires after the manner of Horace, and the poem itself would have served admirably as an introductory satire[3]. M. Vianey, however, is doubtless right in pointing out that it was Ronsard's example which definitely determined the form of French satire, that of a familiar epistle written in the alexandrine metre.

Shortly before Ronsard wrote the poem addressed to

[1] M. Chamard, p. 429, points out that the immediate source of the inspiration is a Latin letter by Turnèbe, a translation of which, evidently by Du Bellay, was published with his *Le poëte courtisan* under the title of *Nouvelle maniere de faire son profit des lettres*. He further points out that a sort of imitation of Du Bellay's satire appeared in the same year under the title of *Le Medecin Courtizan*. It is printed in the *Recueil de poésies françoises*, X. 96 ff.

[2] *Œuvres*, VI. 156 ff., 188 ff.; III. 369. The two former poems were published in 1560; the third was written in 1560 or 1561.

[3] sans vostre faveur, sire,
Je n'ose envenimer ma langue à la satyre.
je seray satyrique,
Disoy-je à vostre frère, à Charles mon seigneur.
Œuvres, III. 283 ff.

Henry III Jean de la Taille published in the same volume with his play the *Gabeonites* (1573) a poem entitled *Le courtisan retiré*, which has a long satirical passage on the court, and which is noteworthy as being in form not an epistle but a narrative with a slight element of dialogue[1]. The satire however is of no great force, and the best part of the poem is the elegiac passage in which the old courtier paints the charms of country life. La Taille also wrote some satirical sonnets[2]. There was also, as we have seen, a satirical vein in Passerat, Rapin, and Durant, which bore fruit in the verses of the *Satire Ménippée*, but none of them wrote regular satires[3]. The first French satires, definitely so-called, were those of Vauquelin de la Fresnaye published in 1605 in his volume of *Diverses poésies*. They are thirty-four in number, divided into five books, but of this respectable total M. Vianey has shewn that twenty-one are direct translations of Horace and the Italian satirists, while the rest are mosaics put together from the same sources. Vauquelin evidently used Sansovino's collection, even borrowing his preface. In this preface it is worth noting that the distinction in form between the satire and the epistle to which Horace has rigidly adhered in all his satires except two[4] is completely missed[5], a mistake which is natural enough in Sansovino, whose model was Ariosto.

Thus when Regnier began to write satires there was little or nothing in his native language to serve as a direct model. His earliest satire, the Second, shews him at the outset wavering between Juvenal and Horace.

> Mais c'est trop sermoné de vice, et de vertu:
> Il faut suiure un sentier qui soit moins rebatu,
> Et conduit d'Apollon recognoistre la trace
> Du libre Juvenal, trop discret est Horace

[1] Ed. R. de Maulde, III. xxii. ff.

[2] *Sonnets Satyriques du camp de Poitou*, 1568, ib. III. ff.

[3] There is a historical sketch of French satire prefixed to Viollet le Duc's edition of Regnier, but it does not give much information.

[4] The first and sixth satires of the First book.

[5] *Il n'y a pas grande difference entre les Epistres et les Satyres d'Horace, fors que volontiers il escrit les Epistres à gens absents et à personnes élonguees. Les diverses poesies*, ed. Travers, p. 131.

Pour un homme piqué, joint que la passion
Comme sans jugement, est sans discretion:
Cependant il vaut mieux sucrer nostre moutarde:
L'homme pour un caprice est sot qui se hazarde[1].

But in fact this is the only one of Regnier's satires which shews any traces of that tone of personal irritation and disappointment which is so marked in Juvenal. Regnier soon came round to the more genial and tolerant mood of Horace. A few lines further on we come upon a translation of Ariosto:

Et que, la grace à Dieu Phœbus et son troupeau,
Nous n'eusmes sur le dos jamais vn bon manteau[2],

and the autobiographical character points to the same influence. Lastly the eloquent appeal to Ronsard,

et vous autres esprits
Que pour estre viuans en mes vers ie n'escris,

(referring especially to Desportes) marks Regnier as a loyal follower of the Pleiad, while the famous line

Meditant vn sonnet, medite vne Evesché

is surely a reminiscence of Du Bellay's *Poëte courtisan* and his

Car vn petit sonnet qui n'a rien que le son, &c.

Generally this first attempt of Regnier's shews a prentice hand. It is ill-composed and disconnected, and its chief merit lies in the concentrated energy of some of the lines, as for instance the following description of vice:

Le vice qui pompeux tout merite repousse,
Et va comme vn banquier en carrosse et en housse.

The Third satire, which probably comes next in date of composition, is much better[3]. It still shews the same in-

[1] Ed. Courbet, p. 14. This satire was written ten years (ib. p. 16) after Regnier entered the service of Joyeuse, and therefore according to my view in 1601.

[2] Apollo tua mercè, tua mercè, santo
Collegio delle Muse, io non possedo
Tanto per voi, ch' io possa farmi un manto. Sat. II.

[3] M. Vianey assigns it conjecturally to the autumn of 1598; I should put it in the late summer of 1603.

fluences; it is modelled to some extent on the first part of Juvenal's Third satire, it has a passage of eight lines translated from Ariosto[1], and it has in the manner of Ariosto a version of a well-known fable.

We now come to two satires, the Fourth and the Sixth, both apparently written between 1603 and 1605[2], in which a new influence appears, that of Italian Burlesque. In the Fourth, a palpable reminiscence of Ronsard's epistle to Pierre Lescot is followed by an arrangement of various passages from a *capitolo* of Dolce. The Sixth is little more than a translation of two *capitoli* of Mauro, *In dishonore dell' honor*, which had already been translated in part by Amadis Jamyn[3]. Neither satire however has much merit.

Regnier, as we have seen, probably returned to France from his last journey to Italy in May, 1605, and for the rest of his life lived chiefly if not entirely at Paris. The Fifth satire which is addressed to the poet Bertaut, apparently before he was made Bishop of Séez (1606), has been acutely and convincingly assigned by M. Vianey to the latter half of 1605[4]. Except the Thirteenth, which is quite different in character, it is the finest of all the satires, the one in which Regnier is most successful in catching the true spirit and tone of Horace, that is to say in making himself the text for a commentary on human nature.

For this indeed he had a model nearer home, and much of the satire is in fact strongly reminiscent of Montaigne. Thus the first forty-six lines which are summed up in the single line:

Et le bien et le mal despend du goust des hommes

recall the Apology for Raimond Sebond, while the striking

[1] Compare the passage beginning *Que me sert de m'asseoir le premier à la table* (ed. Courbet, p. 27) with Ariosto, II. *Che giova a me sedere, &c.*

[2] The reference to the publisher Mamert Patisson shews, says M. Vianey, that the Fourth cannot be much later than 1604. He goes on to identify Dame Frédégonde with Marguérite de Valois and to date the satire by her return to Paris in August, 1605, but this seems very doubtful. The Sixth, addressed to M. Béthune, Sully's brother, was written at Rome, and therefore either between August, 1603, and May, 1604, or between November, 1604, and May, 1605.

[3] Vianey, pp. 119—123; Jamyn, *Œuvres poétiques*, ed. Ch. Brunet, ii. 203 ff.

[4] Vianey, p. 19.

passage on the different ages of man shews a close study of the great Essay on Repentance. But though Regnier owes much in this satire to Horace and Montaigne, it is no paradox to say that in no satire is he more himself. For his debt is to his own spiritual ancestors. Montaigne has been called the French Horace, and Regnier the Montaigne of French poetry[1]. The three men are of one spiritual kin.

The Seventh satire has nothing in it to determine its date, but from its general character I should assign it to the same period as the Fifth. It is the most personal of all, being an apology for the author's readiness to fall in love. The Eighth and Ninth satires must both have been written before Desportes's death in October, 1606, and probably both belong to that year. The Ninth contains the celebrated answer to Malherbe's attack on the Pleiad[2], and the Eighth is an imitation of Horace's *Ibam forte via sacra*[3]. These eight satires together with the First, a dedicatory epistle to the King, and the Twelfth, an apology for satire suggested by the Fourth satire of Horace's First book, were published in 1608.

The second edition, which appeared in 1609, contained two new satires, the Tenth and its continuation the Eleventh. They are very different in character to any of the preceding ones. In the first place they are much longer, in the second they are not epistles but narratives of personal adventure, like the Journey to Brundisium and the Supper of Nasidienus. But the immediate model is not Horace, but Berni, in whose *capitolo* addressed to Fracastoro will be found the outline as well as many episodes of the story. Besides this part of the long and famous description of the pedant is taken almost word for word from a *capitolo* of Cesare Caporali[4], who had revived the art of Bernesque satire in the second half of the sixteenth century, and who, since he lived till the year 1601,

[1] By Sainte-Beuve, who belongs to the same spiritual family.

[2] Malherbe arrived in Paris in August, 1605.

[3] It contains a reference to the approaching completion of the *Pont-Neuf* (Vianey, p. 28).

[4] *Rime piacevoli*, 2 vols. Florence, 1820, II. 171 ff. See Vianey, pp. 124 ff.

may have been personally known to Regnier. Thus for the first time we find in Regnier's work a specimen of that elaborately descriptive vein which is one of the marked features of Berni's satires. If in some parts, especially where he is influenced by Caporali's heavier touch, he keeps up the character of comic exaggeration which is inherent in Bernesque, he shews elsewhere a realistic fidelity, which Balzac might have envied.

The third edition of the Satires, published in 1612 and the last which appeared in Regnier's lifetime contained only one new satire, the most famous of all, *Macette*. Though like the two which preceded it, it is a narrative in form and not an epistle, it is in other respects a complete contrast to them. Instead of a story of adventure it is a simple portrait with only just enough action to give it life. In the place of elaborate descriptions of material things we have a pure study of character, in which nothing external is noticed except gestures and movement.

The sources of this celebrated portrait have been examined with great care, but with some tendency to multiply them unnecessarily. Keeping to what seems fairly certain, the idea was doubtless suggested to Regnier by a poetical *Discours* which appeared in 1609 in a collection entitled *Nouveau Recueil des plus beaux vers de ce temps*, and which was written by a friend of Regnier's named Charles de Lespine[1]. The poem in question is based entirely on an elegy in Ovid's *Amores*, which fifty years before had inspired Du Bellay, Jean Doublet, and possibly Ronsard. Regnier evidently knew Doublet's elegy as is shewn by a comparison between the close of the two poems. But in the hands of Ovid and his imitators the prototype of Macette is merely an ordinary *lena*; in Regnier's she is also a religious hypocrite. Whence did he derive this idea? On this point there is a considerable divergence of opinion between M. Vianey and some pupils of M. Brunot who with his

[1] It has been reprinted with an introduction by E. Courbet as *La Macette du sieur de Lespine*, 1875. M. Vianey has identified Lespine with a secretary of Cardinal du Perron who was at Rome in 1605.

assistance have published an excellent commentary on Regnier's satire[1]. While M. Vianey finds the chief source of inspiration in Aretino, they point to the *Roman de la Rose*, of which the traces are undoubted, to the famous *Celestina* with its numerous French translations, and to characters like Françoise in Odet de Turnèbe's *Les Contents*. I have already said that the influence of the *Celestina* on this comedy in particular and on French comedy in general seems to me doubtful[2], and I doubt still more whether it influenced Regnier. Celestina is not a hypocrite. Her character, it must be admitted, has defects, but hypocrisy is not one of them. Her religion is that of a true Spaniard, none the less genuine, because inconsistent with her calling. It is an inherent part of her character and not merely a mask. On the other hand her Italian sisters having taken to religion in their declining years as a sign of respectability may fairly be called hypocrites. I agree therefore with M. Vianey that it was from Italian rather than from Spanish or French comedy that Regnier took the idea of Macette, and possibly his special model may have been the Alvigia of Aretino's play *Cortigiana*[3].

But whatever her ancestry Macette is of her time and country. She does not practice sorcery like Ovid's Dipsas and most of her prototypes in Italian comedy, nor has religious hypocrisy become with her, as with Alvigia, a second nature. Her religion is purely a mask which she soon lays aside to appear in her true character. Her advice is thoroughly worldly in tone, and she does not like Tartuffe suggest that 'evil actions may be rectified by pure intentions.' It has been said that religious hypocrisy did not exist in Regnier's day. Possibly not, but at any rate a religious revival, the result of the Counter-reformation, was in full activity at Paris. In 1604 the Jesuits had been recalled. In 1602 St François

[1] *Macette* publiée et commentée par F. Brunot et P. Bloume, L. Fourniols, G. Peyré et A. Weil, 1900.

[2] See *ante*, p. 112.

[3] Venice, 1552. In the 3rd *Giornata* of the second part of the *Ragionamenti* La Comare says *Hippocrasie e conscientie sono apellamenti de le nostre cattivita*, but the resemblance between her and Macette is not at all close.

de Sales had spent some months there and had doubtless made an impression on the Parisian ladies by his skill as a director of conscience, an impression which was deepened by the publication in 1609 of his *Introduction to the devout life*. But the devotional works which were the most widely read in France at this time were the writings of St Teresa; so that in reading her *Meditations* Macette was only following the fashion. Now this outburst of religious fervour is spoken of in the Journal of Pierre de l'Estoile, an honest man and a sincere Christian, as a sign of bigotry and hypocrisy. What then must it have seemed to Regnier, who 'shunned all novelty' and was a libertine to boot? In making his Macette a representative of religious hypocrisy, he probably intended to increase the pungency of his satire. If he confused true religion with hypocrisy he is not the only man of pleasure nor the only satirist who has done so. Macette then is in some respects an imaginary portrait, but she is none the less magnificently alive. That she seemed so to the creator of Tartuffe we may feel assured. There are many signs that he had given careful study to her, but I will only notice one here. Just as Macette's appearance on the scene is heralded by a description of her character, so throughout the first two acts of Molière's play Tartuffe dominates the interest without actually appearing on the stage.

Macette was the last satire which Regnier lived to see published, but he left behind him three others—or four if you count the Seventeenth—of which two at least, the Fourteenth and the Sixteenth, were probably written before *Macette*[1]. These, with some other pieces, were published after his death, before the close of the year 1613. They are mainly ethical in character, and apart from the excellence of the versification of no great merit as a whole. But the opening lines of the Fourteenth, which is addressed to Sully, are admirable, and so is the first half of the Fifteenth.

A satirist is presumably a moralist, but this can hardly be said of Regnier. His ethical standard is that of Montaigne

[1] XIV. must have been written before Sully's retirement in January, 1611; and XVI. before Fourquevaux's death in March of that year (Vianey, p. 32).

in his easiest mood and he borrows from him a few of his most comfortable doctrines. But if he is no moralist, he is a marvellous observer and painter of life and manners. The Paris of his day—its streets, its buildings, and above all, its inhabitants—lives again in his verse. For if in parts of the Tenth and Eleventh Satires he resembles a Dutch painter of still life this is not his most characteristic note. His genre-painting with its lively action reminds one rather of Jan Steen. But the painter to whom he is most akin is his younger contemporary, Frans Hals. He has the same mastery over physiognomy and gesture, the same gay audacity, the same brilliant and varied palette. Here is the portrait of the 'bore':

> Un ieune frisé, releué de moustache,
> De galoche, de botte, et d'vn ample pennache.
> . . . . .
> Laissons le discourir,
> Dire cent, et cent fois, il en faudroit mourir,
> Sa Barbe pinçoter, cageoller la science,
> Releuer ses cheueux, dire en ma conscience,
> Faire la belle main, mordre vn bout de ses guents,
> Rire hors de propos, monstrer ses belles dents,
> Se carrer sur vn pied, faire arser son espee,
> Et s'adoucir les yeux ainsi qu'vne poupée[1].

More elaborate and more fantastic in its imaginative audacity is the portrait of the pedant in the Tenth Satire, and the same may be said of the *trois vieilles* in the Eleventh, but they are less true to nature. Besides these more finished portraits there are plenty of sketches sparkling with life and colour. But Regnier's satire is never personal.

> Tout le monde s'y voit et ne s'y sent nommer[2]

is his just boast, and it earned him the name of *le bon* Regnier.

His chief artistic defect is his inability to construct a complete poem. He was too indolent to think out his subject beforehand, and he was content to borrow the setting for his pictures from Horace or Juvenal, or the Italian satirists. As

[1] *Sat.* VIII. M. Vianey points out the resemblance between this portrait and D'Aubigné's Fæneste. M. Rostand's Cyrano is a heroic representative of the same type.

[2] *Sat.* XII.

long as he keeps closely to the lines of his model he is safe; *Macette*, for instance, which is based on Ovid's simple framework, is the one satire which is well constructed. But when, as in the Eighth satire, he tries to improve upon his model, failure awaits him. The narrative in this satire is as inferior to Horace's in clearness and artistic construction as the portrait is superior in brilliance and actuality. It is worse when Regnier trusts entirely to his own invention. The Second satire is remarkable for incoherence, and the Ninth satire which opens so admirably with the famous attack on Malherbe, degenerates into a string of more or less disconnected passages.

We have seen that Regnier was indebted to other writers for more than the mere framework of his satires. He helped himself with quite as free a hand to their thoughts and even to their language. In borrowing from the Italians he was only following the footsteps of his predecessors, especially of his uncle, Desportes, but he improved on their example by treating them in a similar fashion. The first part of his Fourth satire is so closely modelled on the *Epistle to Pierre Lescot* that it echoes Ronsard's words and even his rhymes[1]. His debt to Desportes in *Macette* is considerable; he appropriates his language as if it were family property[2]. Yet with all this no writer has a more thoroughly individual style or one which is less an imitation of the writers from whom he borrows. The general style of the poets of the Pleiad school, except when they are confined within the fourteen lines of a sonnet, is flowing, redundant, and somewhat nerveless. The epithet *doux-coulant*, which was specially applied to Du Bellay, is equally well-suited to most of Ronsard's disciples[3]. Regnier, on the other hand, is concise, vigorous, pregnant. He attains this result partly by an expressive vocabulary, which if it is limited in extent is exceedingly well-

[1] Parquet—caquet; terre—guerre.

[2] See for Regnier's debt to Ronsard and his disciples Vianey pp. 95—105. He however exaggerates the debt to Ronsard in the Ninth satire. M. Vianey also notes the influence of Rabelais (p. 138), but one of the instances he gives is from the Fifth book and therefore in a sense doubtful.

[3] Ronsard's style is much stronger than that of any of his followers.

chosen, and partly by a somewhat arbitrary treatment of the strict rules of syntax. His defects are those of his qualities. He is sometimes obscure, even unintelligible, and he cannot construct a poetical period of more than four lines. Thus it is a fair representation of his artistic merits and shortcomings to say that he is more impressive in isolated passages than in a whole poem, more impressive in short passages than in long ones, and most impressive of all in single lines. Here is a quatrain which rises above the ordinary familiar style of satire :

> Peres des siecles vieux, exemple de la vie,
> Dignes d'estre admirez d'vne honorable enuie,
> (Si quelque beau desir viuoit encor' en nous)
> Nous voyant de là haut Peres qu'en dittes vous?[1]

And here is a longer passage of considerable eloquence :

> Iuste postérité à tesmoing ie t'apelle,
> Toy qui sans passion, maintiens l'œuure immortelle,
> Et qui selon l'esprit, la grace et le sçauoir,
> De race en race au peuple vn ouurage fais voir,
> Vange ceste querelle, et iustement separe
> Du Cigne d'Apollon la corneille barbare
> Qui croassant par tout d'vn orgueil effronté
> Ne couche de rien moins que l'immortalité[2].

Many of his single lines are more or less borrowed from various collections of proverbs, but they are all stamped with the mark of his own personality. Such are

> Les fous sont aux échets les plus proches des Rois,

and,

> Le peché que l'on cache est demi pardonné.

The latter is one of Macette's numerous adages, and is the translation of an Italian original, *Peccato celato è mezzo perdonato*[3]. But it is Regnier's rendering of a Spanish proverb which best illustrates the most striking feature in his style—its imaginative quality. Thus the original *Muda se el pelo como el zelo*, "Our hair changes like our passions," is repre-

[1] *Sat.* v. *Œuvres*, p. 42.
[2] *Sat.* II. *ib.* p. 19.
[3] In a collection published by John Florio, London, 1591 (Vianey, p. 166).

sented by the splendid line, in which the influence of Horace may be also traced,

Et comme notre poil blanchissent noz desirs[1].

I have already quoted the line in which vice is compared to a banker driving in a carriage or riding on a horse. Another good instance is the line in the Fourth satire:

Dire, en serrant la main, Dame, il n'en falloit point,

in which the idea and the last half of the line are taken from the scene between Panurge and Rondibilis[2]. But it is the first half which at once calls up a picture of the doctor closing his hand on his fee. M. Vianey adds to these some striking instances of the manner in which Regnier gives imaginative life to inanimate objects, such as, of two bottles:

Qui disoient sans goulet: Nous avons trop vescu,

and of Macette:

Son œil tout penitent ne pleure qu'eau beniste[3].

It is this divine faculty of imagination which separates Regnier from Malherbe and marks him definitely as belonging to the Pleiad camp. The difference between the two schools is admirably stated in the celebrated Ninth satire:

Cependant leur sçauoir ne s'estend seulement,
Qu'à regrater vn mot douteux au iugement,
Prendre garde qu'vn qui ne heurte vne diphtongue,
Epier si des vers la rime est breue ou longue,
Ou bien si la voyelle à l'autre s'vnissant,
Ne rend point à l'oreille vn vers trop languissant,
Et laissent sur le verd le noble de l'ouurage:
Nul eguillon diuin n'esleue leur courage,
Ils rampent bassement foibles d'inuentions,
Et n'osent peu hardis tanter les fictions,
Froids à l'imaginer, car s'ils font quelque chose,
C'est proser de la rime, et rimer de la prose
Que l'art lime et relime et polit de façon
Qu'elle rend à l'oreille vn agreable son[4].

[1] *Lenit albescens animos capillos*, Odes, III. xv. 24. See E. Roy in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* III. 619 and Vianey, p. 164.

[2] *Pantagruel*, III. 33, *He, he, he, monsieur il ne falloit rien. Grand mercy toutesfois.* [3] Vianey, p. 232. [4] *Œuvres*, p. 68.

Poetry differs from prose by its use of the imaginative faculty—this was the doctrine of Ronsard and his disciples, and in this they were right and Malherbe was utterly wrong. They were also right in holding that poetry is the offspring of genius and inspiration, but when they went on to despise labour and polish and other signs of careful workmanship, they were wrong and Malherbe was right. Had Malherbe condescended to give an articulate expression to his views he would have said, as Boileau said later,

Soyez-vous à vous-même un sévère critique[1].

The great fault of the Pleiad school from Ronsard to Regnier was, as we have seen, its lack of self-criticism. The one claim of Malherbe—and it is a large one—to the gratitude of his countrymen is that he was the first French critic.

Note on the date of Regnier's earliest satire.

The Second satire, which is almost certainly the first in point of date, was written after Regnier had spent ten years in the service of the Cardinal de Joyeuse. Now Brossette in his commentary says that he entered that service in 1583, when he was twenty years old. This is clearly wrong, for he was born in 1573, and later writers have supposed that Brossette meant 1593. But Brossette's statement is unsupported by any evidence, and consequently M. Courbet conjectures that Regnier really entered the Cardinal's service in 1587, just after the Cardinal was appointed to the dignity of Protector of France at Rome. Regnier himself says:

> C'est donc pourquoy si ieune abandonnant la France
> I'allay vif de courage, et tout chaud d'esperance
> En la cour d'vn Prelat, qu'auecq' mille dangers
> I'ay suiuy courtisan aux païs estrangers.
>
> *Sat.* II. (*Œuvres*, p. 16).

[1] *L'art poëtique*, I. The whole of the latter part of this first *chant* is practically a criticism of the workmanship of Ronsard's school.

Now though *si jeune* is a somewhat vague term and may fairly apply to any age under eighteen, that of thirteen is certainly very young for an appointment of this sort. But a stronger objection to M. Courbet's date is that it puts the Second satire as early as 1597, while none of the other satires, except possibly the Third and the Seventh, were written before 1603. There are two possible dates for the Third, 1598 and 1603, and of these the latter is preferable because it is too mature to be the work of a young man of five and twenty. There is nothing to help us to the date of the Seventh except its similarity in tone to the Third. Supposing then the Second satire to have been written in 1597, it means that Regnier wrote only two satires, or at the most three, in a period of six years, and that he began to write at the age of twenty-four, an early age for a kind of writing which requires considerable knowledge of human nature. I should therefore conjecture that Regnier entered the service of Joyeuse in the first half of 1591 and accompanied him first to Spain and then to Italy. The Second satire would then have been written in 1601.

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All the above editions, except the last, represent successive stages of the text. In that of 1609 satires x and xi are very incorrectly printed, as

is satire xv. in the edition of 1613. Certain improvements in the text, supplementing those introduced by M. Courbet, have been suggested by R. Dezeimeris, *Leçons nouvelles et remarques sur le texte de divers auteurs*, Bordeaux, 1876, and *Corrections et remarques sur le texte de divers auteurs, ib.* 1880; by A. Benoist, *Notes sur le texte de Regnier* in *Annales de la Faculté des Lettres de Bordeaux*, pp. 240—249, 1879; and by J. Vianey, *Mathurin Regnier*, pp. 272—287, 1896.

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CHAPTER XXIX

CONCLUSION

We have seen how in the reign of Henry II Italian influences starting from the encouragement given by Francis I to Italian artists and men of letters thoroughly permeated French art and literature. As a consequence some writers, who regard the Renaissance as a peculiarly Italian product, speak of the reign of Henry II as the period in which the French Renaissance reached its zenith. To some extent this is true. Under some aspects the reign of Francis I, especially from the point of view of literature, may be considered as the preparation for the Renaissance rather than as the Renaissance itself, or at any rate as the dawn of the Renaissance rather than as its full noontide. For we find that none of the writers of that reign, neither Marot nor Rabelais nor Margaret of Navarre, have altogether shaken themselves free from mediæval traditions. But when we come to compare the two periods, the national period and the Italian period, we see that the advantage is not altogether on the side of the latter. If the later literature is more artistic, it is also more conscious of its art. It is less robust, less spontaneous. Elegance takes the place of energy, culture of vitality.

Further if Ronsard and Du Bellay have a more serious conception of art, Rabelais and Margaret of Navarre have a more serious conception of life. This is due in a measure to the influence of that religious movement which was itself a product of the Renaissance spirit. With that

movement no one at the outset shewed greater sympathy than Margaret of Navarre, and though she never separated herself from the Church of her ancestors, the strong impression which the new doctrines made upon her quickened the spiritual side of her deeply religious nature. The same sympathy with the new doctrines finds a cautious expression in Rabelais's *Gargantua*, and though the Utopian dream with which the book concludes warns us how little its author was likely to accept the form in which French Protestantism was on the eve of being dogmatised by Calvin, the influence of the religious controversy may be traced in the more philosophic character of the Third book. Marot who became a Protestant was a less serious thinker than either Margaret or Rabelais who remained Catholics, but though his pleasure-loving nature found its most complete expression in *rondeaux* and familiar epistles and other lighter forms of verse, some of his less-known and less successful poems manifest a serious and religious spirit.

During the last ten years of his reign Francis I shewed increasing hostility to the new religious doctrines. The attitude of his successor was even more uncompromising; on that point alone his three advisers, Diane de Poitiers, the Constable de Montmorency, and the Cardinal de Lorraine were of the same mind. It followed that the poets of the Pleiad, who depended largely on Court favour, shared none of the Protestant sympathies of the older generation. Du Bellay might satirise the Roman *curia*, Ronsard might call attention to the shortcomings of the French clergy, but they could not be other than loyal supporters of a Church of which they were beneficiaries. At heart their religion, as of most of their fellow-poets, was a strange compound of Christianity and paganism, a Christianity which was mainly formal and ceremonial, a paganism shorn of its nobler ideals and more spiritual aspirations. To enjoy life in its most beautiful forms, whether of art or of nature, was the whole sum of their philosophy.

Such being the difference in character between these two phases of the French Renaissance, the literature of the one

being hardy and native, of the other beautiful and exotic, it was of the greatest advantage to the successful developement of French literature that the Italian phase was preceded by the national one. When the Pleiad issued their manifesto, the foundations of a great national literature had already been laid, and it was upon these foundations, however much they might ignore them, that they themselves built. There was no such break of continuity as they pretended in French literature. They only carried out with a bolder hand and in a more conscious spirit what their predecessors had begun. Indeed when their day was over and their successor Malherbe treated them with the same contumely with which they had treated Marot, their whole work might have perished had it not rested upon the foundations which Marot and Rabelais and Margaret of Navarre had laid. Happily it did not, and the lesson which they taught to their countrymen was never unlearnt. This lesson was the value of style.

But, as we have seen, even before the advent of Malherbe a reaction began to set in not merely against the poetry of the Pleiad but against the whole Italian influence. After the death of Charles IX and the retirement of Ronsard from the Court (1574) the Pleiad divided into two streams, the one represented by the Protestant provincial, Du Bartas, whose poetry is a protest against the paganism and frivolity of the court poets, and the other by the Catholic courtier, Desportes, who, while he pillages the Italians even more sedulously than his predecessors, returns in his less imitative productions to the lighter and more realistic vein of Marot. In his contemporaries Passerat and Durant this tendency is even more strongly marked. The attack upon Italian influences was further enforced by the two treatises which Henri Estienne published in 1579 and 1580 in defence of the national language. Lastly the nameless abominations and grotesque superstitions of the court of Henry III intensified the dislike of all Italian ideas and fashions.

This reaction against Italian influence affected also the whole attitude of thought towards the Renaissance. The

unhappy condition of the country, the long religious warfare, the impotent government, inspired all thoughtful men with a sense of disillusion. The promise of the Renaissance had apparently died away in bloodshed and anarchy. The golden age of learning which Gargantua had hailed with such eloquent enthusiasm had made the world neither better nor wiser.

Montaigne is too original a thinker to be really typical of the thought of his time, but seeing that he is the greatest name of this third and last phase of the French Renaissance it is pertinent to consider his attitude towards the Renaissance generally. Like his whole view of life it was complex, and even inconsistent. He was an enthusiastic admirer and constant reader of classical literature, but unlike the ardent humanists of the first half of the century he knew Greek imperfectly and preferred to read Greek authors in Latin or French translations. He is not altogether in favour of the humanistic education of his day. "Greek and Latin," he says, "are fine accomplishments, but we pay too dearly for them." He accepts unquestioned any statement of fact by a classical writer, but he is by no means a slave to their opinions. Similarly with regard to Italian literature. His library was full of Italian books, and he was a great admirer of the Italian epistolary writers, and a reader of Guicciardini and the other Italian historians. But he accuses those of barbarous stupidity who compare Ariosto with Virgil, and he has a higher opinion of the French poets of his own day, especially of Ronsard and Du Bellay, whom he finds in certain respects "not far short of the ancient perfection."

Montaigne, as we know, did not mind being inconsistent, but we may find a certain consistency in his attitude towards the Renaissance by describing it as the developement to their logical results of its two fundamental principles, individualism and the right of free inquiry. If the individual is to have free play for his actions and aspirations, if he is to be a law unto himself, it becomes of the highest importance that he should know himself. If he is to enjoy life he must know how to live, and if this enjoyment is not to be overshadowed by the

constant fear of death he must know how to die[1]. But this study of man and human nature which Montaigne advocated as the basis of all education and all philosophy implies a seriousness of purpose and a constancy of aim quite contrary to the restless craving after pleasure and excitement which is so characteristic of the Renaissance. Thus this very principle of the Renaissance became in Montaigne's hands a corrective of the excess to which it had been carried.

So with regard to the right of free inquiry. The earlier French humanists were dazzled by the vision of a world in which this right was fully recognised, and were too much engrossed in the exploration of its treasures to think of criticising it. They paid almost the same reverence to classical antiquity as their forefathers had paid to the Church. The first Frenchman who seriously questioned its authority was Pierre Ramus. Montaigne, though his criticism of the ancient writers was less bold than that of Ramus, was far more comprehensive in his application of the right of free inquiry. He not only questioned by the light of common sense most existing institutions and opinions, but he attacked the very basis of all knowledge. However incomplete and inconsistent his scepticism may have been, it at any rate inspired him, even in his most hopeful moments, with an exceedingly modest estimate of human virtue and wisdom. The *Essays*, it is true, end on a note of tranquil serenity, which reminds one of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, but it is far removed from the buoyant optimism of the Abbey of Thelema and the oracle of the Bottle. It tells us that the Renaissance day is drawing to its close.

Thus the three periods into which this history has been divided roughly represent three distinct phases not only of French Renaissance literature but of the Renaissance itself. But these phases share in common certain characteristics which impress upon the whole literature a persistent and well-defined character. In the first place it is strongly individual-

[1] It will be recollected that the title of Montaigne's first important essay (I. 19) is, *To be a philosopher is to learn how to die.*

istic. The definition of literature as the expression of society is obviously an incomplete one, but of no body of literature is it more incomplete than of that which we are now considering. There is hardly a work of the sixteenth century, however impersonal in form, which is not full of information as to the life and character of the writer. *Pantagruel* abounds in personal reminiscences; the tales of the *Heptameron* profess to be all within the experience of the royal authoress or her immediate circle; Marot is a delightful egoist; Du Bellay's poetry charms us by its intimate note; many of Ronsard's poems contain long autobiographical passages; autobiography has invaded D'Aubigné's History and inspired him with the finest episode in *Les Tragiques*; in no period of French literature has the harvest of personal memoirs been more abundant or more remarkable. Thus Montaigne in making himself the centre of his book was only carrying out in a more thorough and more conscious fashion the practice of nearly every writer of the sixteenth century.

Le sot projet de se peindre says Pascal; but the world is not of his opinion. The world likes self-portraiture, provided only that it is sincere and without pose. Now this is emphatically the case with the writers of our period; with the single exception of Margaret of Valois they are absolutely sincere and unaffected. Their books are *livres de bonne foi*, and they talk about themselves, not because they think they are interesting to others, but because they are supremely interested in themselves. The result is that whatever they write has at least the merit of freshness and enthusiasm. Even the most imitative work of the Pleiad catches from the enthusiasm of the writers a breath of life and originality often wanting to their models.

Now this keen enjoyment of life on the part of the Renaissance writers arises in part from the strength of their sensuous impressions. Hence gusto, which is the recognised name in literature and art for the expression of strong sensuous impressions, is a quality of frequent occurrence in Renaissance literature. The most notable example is Rabelais, who, according to Hazlitt in his well-known essay on Gusto,

has, with Boccaccio, more of it than any other prose writer. But it is to be found also, if in a less degree, in Margaret of Navarre and Montaigne, in Brantôme and Monluc, in Henri Estienne and D'Aubigné. In all of these it often takes the form of extraordinary vividness of presentment so that scenes and events stand out on their canvas in brilliant colour and relief.

Gusto implies strong rather than deep emotion. Hence it is associated, as a rule, with a lively rather than with a penetrative imagination. This is the case with the writers of the French Renaissance. Their imagination plays with the surface of things and does not penetrate to the depths. It is illustrative rather than creative. The creative writers of the first half of the sixteenth century, Rabelais, Margaret of Navarre, and Des Periers, have no more imagination than is absolutely necessary for all artistic creation. Rabelais is the least imaginative of the great creative writers of the world. On the other hand, it was the great achievement of the Pleiad that they introduced imagination into poetic style, that they recognised it to be an indispensable quality of the language of poetry. And their influence affected also the language of prose. The style of Amyot and of Montaigne is essentially an imaginative style. Thus down to the advent of Malherbe imagination becomes an unfailing characteristic of prose and verse alike.

These then are the great qualities of French Renaissance literature, individuality, vividness, imagination. But if it is great on the human side, it is weak on the artistic side. If the writers have in full measure the energy, the sincerity, and the strong feeling which are necessary for the genesis of a work of art, they lack the sense of form which is required to perfect the artistic conception. It is not too much to say that no work of any considerable length by any writer of the French Renaissance is constructed on a preconceived plan. They write as their mood prompts them, they give rein to their inspiration and become its servant instead of its master. It is needless to multiply instances. Montaigne alone will suffice. For Montaigne had the artistic

temperament in a strong degree, and in his later essays at any rate he shews true artistic care and affection for his work. Yet his essays are formless, and this very formlessness is one of their charms. It is true that we may detect a central idea in even the most rambling of his *vagabondages* and that some of his admirers have maintained that the apparent disorder of his writing veils without wholly concealing a higher order[1]. But this theory does not explain the additions which Montaigne was in the habit of making to his essays after their publication. For though an accomplished artist may go on putting fresh touches to his work long after it is practically finished, he will not make changes in detail which obviously interfere with its unity.

The artistic execution of the Renaissance writers is superior to their artistic conception, but it is the execution of gifted amateurs rather than of trained artists. For all their admiration for Greek poetry, the Pleiad failed to learn from their masters the lessons of self-restraint and moderation, of patient and accurate workmanship.

> Vingt fois sur le métier remettez votre ouvrage,
> Polissez-le sans cesse, et le repolissez,
> Ajoutez quelquefois, et souvent effacez.

This advice of Boileau's was wholly alien to the spirit and practice of most of the writers of the sixteenth century. Hence, except in quite short pieces, their work is seldom, if ever, perfect in execution throughout, and it may be said of all of them, even of Rabelais and Montaigne, that they are better to read in than to read continuously. This lack of the critical habit in literature was in conformity with the general spirit of the age, but it was partly due to the absence of a central standard either in language or in taste.

We have seen that during the reigns of Francis I and Henry II such a standard was in a measure furnished by the Court and that we can trace its influence, not only in the

[1] See especially E. Ruel, *op. cit.* c. iii (*Les "essais" sont une œuvre d'art*), and pp. 374 ff. where he gives an analysis of the essay entitled *Des coches*; see also *ante*, pp. 172 f.

poetry of Marot and Saint-Gelais and the Pleiad school, but in the French versions of *Amadis* and the *Decameron*, and even in the more famous translations made by Amyot. But a Court standard is not the same thing as a national standard, for like that of every small coterie it is liable to be debased by the alloys of passing fashion. Thus under Henry II Italian influences began, as we have seen, to invade alike taste and language, increasing in force under the rule of Catharine de' Medici till exaggeration brought the inevitable reaction. Moreover the unity of the kingdom, which had been steadily growing during the reigns of Francis I and his son, received a severe check from the wars of religion. For the next thirty years not only was France divided into two camps, but the great nobles, who had been gradually coming to recognise the central authority of the Crown, began once more to assert their independence and to make the public troubles a pretext for personal insubordination.

These centrifugal forces acted inevitably on literature. By far the most important of the literary work that was produced in France during the last twenty years of the sixteenth century was written far away from the Court or the capital. The most productive quarter was Gascony, where Montaigne, Monluc, and Brantôme, each in the retreat of his own *château*, wrote ostensibly to beguile their leisure and at any rate with no idea of conformity to a central standard. To the same province belonged Pierre de Brach and his better-known friend Du Bartas, whose poetry is a notable instance of the evil effects of provincialism on literature. The works of most of these Gascon writers were published at Bordeaux, which with its flourishing College of Guyenne served as the intellectual centre of the whole South-western district of France.

Another such centre was Poitiers, where between the years 1550 and 1560 an offshoot of the Pleiad was formed under the leadership of Jacques Tahureau. Further to the North we find Noel du Fail publishing at the Breton capital, Rennes, work of which the chief interest lies in its strong local flavour.

Of Normandy, with its two centres, Rouen and the university town of Caen, the chief representative during our period is Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, who resided at Caen, but Rouen also served as a literary capital for the neighbouring province of Maine, and it was at Rouen that the majority of the editions of Garnier's plays were published. But even during this period Norman aspirants to literary fame began to turn their steps to Paris ; Bertaut and Du Perron were heralds of Malherbe, the sworn enemy of provincialism.

Nothing like the same literary activity was shewn in the Eastern half of France. Neither Reims, the capital of Champagne, nor Dijon, the capital of Burgundy, were of any importance in the literary world, and if Larivey, as it is possible, wrote his comedies at Troyes, they were published at Paris. Even Lyons, which during the reign of Francis I had been second only to Paris as a literary and intellectual centre, was throughout the second half of the sixteenth century illustrated by no name except that of Louise Labé, whose tiny volume was printed there at the very beginning of that period. Half-way between Lyons and the sea, among the hills to the west of the Rhone valley, Olivier de Serres wrote his great treatise on Agriculture.

A notable exception to the general lack of self-criticism is furnished by Amyot, who in every line reveals the conscientious and critical artist. He was in consequence the one prose author of the sixteenth century who was accepted unchallenged by the seventeenth, a fact which suggests a brief retrospect of the developement of French prose during our period. At the close of the first half of the century the two great masters of French prose were Rabelais and Calvin, but they were masters in very different styles. Rabelais is picturesque and imaginative, Calvin abstract and logical. Calvin writes as a thinker, Rabelais as an artist. Rabelais therefore uses freely all the constructions of the older language which make for picturesqueness or harmony, such as the omission of the article and the pronoun, the use of the infinitive as a substantive, ellipse, and inversion. His use of the last for the sake of a harmonious cadence, even at the expense of

lucidity, is very noticeable, and becomes more daring with advancing years. It must be remembered that these constructions were the heritage of mediæval French from Latin, and that the revived study of Latin would naturally tend to continue them in favour with scholars like Rabelais. Still more marked was the influence of Latin upon syntax, and Rabelais's sentences are often purely Latin in construction.

Calvin, starting from the same point as Rabelais, was led by different aims to a different goal. His chief object being to convince, he gradually freed himself from archaisms and Latinisms, which, however much they might contribute to the picturesqueness and harmony of the sentence, were hindrances to its lucidity. In so doing he was following partly the natural bent of his logical mind, partly the prevailing trend of the language. Even before Rabelais's death we find Joachim du Bellay, in the *Deffence*, warning the young poet not to fall into the common vice of omitting the article, a vice by the way from which he himself is not altogether free. Fifteen years later Ronsard, in the *Abrégé de l'art poétique* (1565), repeats the injunction, coupling with it another, not to omit the personal pronoun. In the second preface to the *Franciade*, written after 1572, he pronounces strongly against inversion, even in poetry. The other archaisms noticed above lingered somewhat longer. The use of the infinitive as a substantive is practised even by Protestant writers, such as La Noue and Du Plessis-Mornay. Another Protestant, Henri Estienne, though, like his co-religionists, he belongs on the whole to the progressive school, still clings in some matters to the older ways. But La Noue and Estienne, as well as another Protestant, D'Aubigné, happened to be close students of Rabelais, whose influence, there can be little doubt, did something to stay the decay of the old picturesque forms.

It is Amyot who best marks the change that was coming over French prose. Though his style retains to the last the picturesque and imaginative character of the older school, he gradually abandons such archaisms as inversion and the omission of the article and the pronoun. But the great service that he rendered to French prose was the improve-

ment of the period. In the later-written of his Lives, which were completed in 1559, his periods, though still somewhat long, are constructed with considerable art. They are well-balanced, harmonious, and above all thoroughly French in construction. Finally, as we have seen, in his treatise on rhetoric, written after the accession of Henry III, he declares himself in favour of a shorter period, and his practice corresponds to his precept.

His greatest pupil was Montaigne, who wrote his first considerable and really characteristic essay, the nineteenth of the first book, *That philosophy is to know how to die*, in the year of the publication of the *Œuvres morales*. Like his master he belongs to the picturesque and imaginative school, but like him he has moved with the times, and even in the earliest specimen that we have of his writing, the letter to his father on the death of La Boétie (1563), there is hardly an inversion or an omission of an article or a pronoun. His translation of Raymond de Sebonde is written in a clear though undistinguished style. But the "incomparable" *Essays*, however superior to Amyot's work in brilliancy and genius, are inferior as models of French prose. The language is less pure and less precise than Amyot's, the construction of his periods less orderly and harmonious. For Montaigne's aim was to write "as a man and not as an author," to fit his style to the ever-changing facets of his thought. He is therefore careless of form and harmony. He sacrifices everything, even lucidity, to the truth of the impression.

But meanwhile the general trend of French prose was in the direction of restraint and logic. With the better writers sentences became shorter and less involved, their use of words more precise, and their sense of harmony more sure. There was still, however, much to learn, how much may be judged from the comparison already made between the prose of Du Vair and Du Perron and that of Jean Guez de Balzac thirty years later. But the lessons of Rabelais and Montaigne were not lost; when after another thirty years Pascal created modern French prose, he united the variety of Rabelais with the sincerity of Montaigne.

This change in the character of French prose from disorder to order, from the long period to the short one, from the sway of imagination to the sway of reason, is exactly paralleled in our own literature, though with us it took place somewhat later, chiefly between the years 1660 and 1680. In fact the literature of the English Renaissance followed more or less the same course as that of the French. The publication of Tottel's *Miscellany* in 1557 corresponds to that of Marot's poems in 1532, *The Shepheards Calendar* of 1579 to Ronsard's *Odes* of 1550, and though there is no landmark in the history of English poetry so sharply defined as the arrival of Malherbe at Paris in 1605, the beginning of our age of reason is roughly indicated by the appearance of Denham's *Cooper's Hill* in 1642, and of Waller's poems in 1645.

English prose was slower of developement than English poetry, for it produced nothing comparable to the work of Rabelais until the appearance of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* in 1594, more than forty years after the great Frenchman's death. After that came Bacon, Ben Jonson, Burton, and the splendid but unequal writers of the Caroline age. But none of them, unless it be Bacon, can be named with Rabelais and Montaigne. For these two are not only great artists in prose but they are, like Shakespeare, among the greatest names of literature; their message is for all time and to all the world. To them we must add not only Calvin and Amyot, but a number of lesser prose-writers whose work, if less mature than the best poetry of the Pleiad, is superior to it in energy and intellectual power. Thus while the English Renaissance is strongest on the poetic side, while there is nothing in France to match the high poetic achievement of the *Fairy Queen*, the melody and passion of our songs and lyrics, the splendour of our drama, the French Renaissance is strongest on the side of prose, and in three departments of it, memoir-writing, the short story, and prose-satire, shews a decided superiority.

The number and excellence of the memoirs which were produced in France during the last quarter of the sixteenth century has already been sufficiently pointed out. Although

the second half of the century produced no collection of tales equal to those of Margaret of Navarre and Desperiers, several writers of this period possessed considerable skill in telling a story, such as Noel du Fail, Henri Estienne and D'Aubigné, and not a few works owed their popularity to the numerous short stories which they contained. In nearly all of them the spirit of satire was strong, but satire took many other forms. Its highest achievement in prose was the *Satire Ménippée*, and in verse it produced some of the finest examples of French Renaissance literature, Regnier's *Macette* with portions of his other satires, the finest passages in D'Aubigné's *Les Tragiques*, and the satirical sonnets of Du Bellay's *Regrets*. Between these and the rough and artificial work of Donne, Hall, and Marston there is no comparison.

But underlying these differences, due to national temperament, between the Renaissance literatures of France and England there is a very considerable likeness. In both we find the same energy and freshness, the same enjoyment of life, the same imaginative glow, the same carelessness with regard to execution and form. On the other hand we note with something of surprise a great dissimilarity between the Renaissance literature of France and that of her classical age. At first sight they seem to have hardly a single characteristic in common. Where in the sixteenth century, except in Calvin, is the love of order, the lucidity, and the almost superstitious regard for logic that we have come to regard as innate qualities of the French nation? What becomes of Taine's theory of fixed racial characteristics?

It is Taine himself who furnishes the clue to the answer. In his remarkable essay on *M. Troplong et M. de Montalembert*[1], in which he attributes the difference that has always existed between the government of England and that of France partly to political circumstances and partly to natural moral conditions, he describes his own countrymen as *une race légère et sociable*, which in all ages has possessed "the gift of being clear and agreeable, the art of making itself understood, and

[1] *Essais de critique et d'histoire* (7th ed. 1896), pp. 269 ff.

of being listened to." It has also, he says, the analytical faculty[1]. The talent for agreeable talk and the talent for analysis—these then may be regarded as qualities more or less innate in the French race, and to one or the other of them may be traced those features of French Renaissance literature which distinguish it from that of this country, namely, its success in the *conte*, in satire, and in memoirs.

But the French people are a product of many races, Iberians, Ligurians, Celts, Romans, Franks, Burgundians, Visigoths, and these races have been moulded by a considerable diversity of climates. We must therefore be prepared to find much diversity of characteristics alike in the people and in the literature. Moreover the literature of a nation is always more or less liable to be influenced by the second of Taine's factors, the environment. Thus we have seen that the poetry alike of Marot and of the Pleiad was influenced by the courtly atmosphere in which it was nourished, that the close connexion of France with Italy, begun by war and kept alive by marriage ties and intellectual intercourse, ended by Italianising French poetry, and that the long civil war which divided and desolated the kingdom and finally almost brought it under the yoke of Spain in the end awakened a renewed sense of national existence and national honour, and so implanted a stouter fibre in the literature.

But after all the strongest collective influence was that of the "moment." It was the mighty irresistible impulse of the Renaissance which gave the literature its vigour, its freshness, its spontaneity; it was the feeling of emancipation from mediæval swaddling-clothes which led men to give free utterance to whatever stirred their emotions or stimulated their intellect; it was the thirst for personal glory and posthumous fame which urged them to immortalise themselves in undying verse or at least to leave for posterity a record of their own lives. It is this influence of a great spiritual and intellectual movement predominating over racial characteristics and political environment which justifies the claim

[1] *Essais de critique et d'histoire* (7th ed. 1896), pp. 315, 317 and 321.

of this literature to the distinctive name of the literature of the French Renaissance.

One of the chief forces in which this movement found expression was humanism. Of its influence on the literature we have had abundant evidence in these pages. Many of the works noticed are saturated to pedantry with classical quotations and classical allusions. There is hardly a writer who has not at least a tincture of classical learning. Even Paré and Palissy, who knew neither Greek nor Latin, had a second-hand acquaintance with some classical authors. Even the rough soldier, Monluc, called his memoirs *Commentaries*, after the example of Julius Cæsar. But on the other hand, in spite of this cult of antiquity, in spite of the superstitious regard that was paid to the classical ideal in thought and art, and even in morals, the greater part of the literature is wholly unclassical in form. And this is not only the case with the writings of the early Renaissance, with *Pantagruel* and the *Heptameron*; but even after the lesson had been learnt in Dorat's lecture-room that the great classical writers were deserving of study not only for their learning and wisdom and for the stimulus they gave to liberty of thought, but for their art, their devotion to form and style, their patient workmanship, even then the lesson was learnt imperfectly.

Ronsard, indeed, and Du Bellay in many of their sonnets and shorter lyrics have caught something of classical restraint and classical felicity of phrase, and the *Satire Ménippée*, thoroughly national though it is in sentiment, is classical in its adherence to a carefully planned design. But what can be more unclassical in form than Montaigne's *Essays*, or the memoirs of Brantôme or Monluc, or Du Bartas's *Semaine*, or D'Aubigné's *Les Tragiques* and *Histoire Universelle*? Even Regnier, writing satires more or less after the pattern of Horace, has learnt from his model no lessons of artistic conception or artistic construction.

This failure to realise the classical ideal of literary art was due to the lack of the critical spirit. To create this spirit was the work of Malherbe. And when Malherbe's

work had been perfected by Pascal and Boileau French literature became at once national in spirit and classical in form. But to trace the history of this developement, to investigate the various causes which made French literature national instead of provincial, social instead of individualistic, rational instead of imaginative, lies beyond the scope of the present narrative.

APPENDIX E.

The authorship of the Discours merveilleux.

The latest event mentioned in the *Discours merveilleux* is the confirmation of Catharine as regent by the new king Henry III. The letters-patent containing this confirmation are dated from Cracow June 15, 1574, and cannot well have reached Paris before July 1, for Catharine's messenger announcing the death of Charles IX, which took place on May 30, reached Cracow on June 15. The writing of the pamphlet must, therefore, have been completed early in July, and it was probably printed and circulated soon afterwards. Pierre de l'Estoile notes in his journal between September 20 and October 1: *En ce temps la Vie de la Reine-Mère imprimée court partout. Les cours de Lyon en sont pleines* (I. 27).

But the earliest known edition bears the date of 1575. It has 164 pp. (sig. a^8—k^8 l^2) and is carelessly printed on fairly good paper. There is no printer's name or place of printing, but L'Estoile's remark suggests either Lyons or Geneva. The British Museum has also a copy of another edition dated 1575. It is printed in much smaller type than the preceding and has 96 pages (sig. A^8—F^8).

In 1576 appeared a true second edition, *plus correcte, mieux disposee que la premiere, et augmentée de quelques particularitez.* Collation: a^8—g^8 i^4 k^2; one leaf not numbered + 121 pp. numbered III to CXXIII + one page blank. Without printer's name or place of printing (a copy in my possession). Among the additions are a number of couplets of a sententious character, many of which are translated from Greek authors. An instance of its greater correctness is that the names of La Mole and Coconnas are now spelt correctly, whereas in the 1575 edition of 164 pp. we find La Maule, and variously Couconnax, Coconnace, or Coconnaz. A third edition, published in 1578, reproduced the text of 1576. (See Lelong, 2nd ed. II. 649.) But in an edition published in 1643 many of the

couplets are omitted, and this text was reproduced in 1663 in an edition which is generally to be found bound up with the *Recueil de diverses pièces servans à l'histoire de Henry III*, published at Cologne [Brussels] in 1660.

The latest suggestion as to the authorship is that of M. Clément in his *Henri Estienne et son œuvre française*, 1899. He thinks that the joint authors were Innocent Gentillet, the author of the *Anti-Machiavel*, and Estienne, the latter's special contribution being the prologue and the more satirical parts. I have already stated the fatal objections to Estienne's authorship, and they are hardly lessened by supposing that he had a partner. In supporting Gentillet's claim M. Clément lays stress on the sententious couplets, pointing out that similar ones occur in the *Anti-Machiavel*, but this argument will not avail against the fact that whereas Gentillet in the *Anti-Machiavel* correctly speaks of the favourite of Brunhild as Protadius, the author of the *Discours merveilleux* calls him Proclaide[1].

M. Weiss, in reviewing Clément's book (*Bull. Prot. français* XLIX.), while rejecting his view as to the authorship, suggests La Planche or Hotman. But the style of La Planche is more distinctly archaic than that of the *Discours*, while the mistake as to the name of Brunhild's favourite precludes a competent historian like Hotman, who, in fact, gives the name correctly in the *Franco-gallia*. Moreover, in 1574 he was engaged in writing the *De furoribus gallicis*.

[1] The name Proclaide is doubtless derived from the *Grandes chroniques* or *Annales de France* in some form or other. It appears in Belleforest, whose arrangement of the *Grandes chroniques* appeared in 1573, and to whom the author of the *Discours merveilleux* refers as *Un certain brouillon nommé Belleforest*. Du Haillan, who relied on Paulus Aemilius more than on the *Grandes chroniques*, gives the name as Protade or Proclade.

APPENDIX F.

The genesis of the Satire Ménippée.

1. *Bibliography of the more important early editions.*

1. La vertv dv Catholicon d'Espagne: Auec vn Abregé de la tenue des Estats de Paris convoquez au X de Febvrier 1593 par les chefs de la Ligue, tiré des memoires de Mademoiselle de la Lande, alias la Bayonnoise, et des secrettes confabulations d'elle et du pere Commelaid. M.D. XCIIII.

Collation, A^4—Y^4; 88 ll., all numbered except the title-page; on l. 2 v^0. is a woodcut of a charlatan playing on a lute.

Contains at the end seventeen pieces of verse.

Bib. Nat.

This is the only edition numbered by leaves instead of pages, and the only one which contains no more than seventeen pieces of verse. Read's text follows this edition.

2. Satyre Menippee de la vertu du Catholicon d'Espagne et de la tenue des Estatz de Paris, 1594.

Collation, A—P^8; 240 pp. (numbering cut away).

Contains forty pieces of verse, but not the *Asne ligueur* nor the *Deuxième advis*. The passage relating to Villeroy is unaltered.

Brit. Mus.

3. Satyre Menippee de la vertu du Catholicon d'Espagne et de la tenue des Estatz de Paris. A laquelle est adiousté un Discours sur l'interpretation du mot de Higuiero d'Infierno, &c. qui en est l'Autheur. Plus le regret sur la mort de l'Asne Ligueur d'une Damoyselle qui mourut durant le siege de Paris. M.D. XCIIII.

Collation, a^8; 8 ll. not numbered: A—R^8; 272 pp. numbered 1—256, 259—274.

Badly printed.

Brit. Mus. (Grenville Library); *Bib. Nat.*

Contains forty pieces of verse besides the *Asne ligueur*, and at the end the *Deuxième advis*. The passage relating to Villeroy is altered. The text of Tricotel's edition, 2 vols. 1877—1884, is printed from this.

Frank's text follows an edition of which there is a copy in the Imperial Library at Vienna. It is dated 1594, and has 196 pp.; it contains forty pieces of verse, but is without the *Deuxième advis*.

The editions bearing the date of 1593, such as that in the *Bib. Mazarine* of 255 pp., and that in the Brit. Mus. of 414 pp., really belong to 1594.

2. *The primitive text.*

Constant Leber, a competent and distinguished bibliophil who died in 1807, declared that he had seen a thin pamphlet of fifteen leaves with the title of *La Vertu du Catholicon d'Espagne*, and that it was printed at Tours by Iamet Mettayer. Its existence, however, is otherwise unknown. (See Read, *Le texte primitif*, p. xxv.) Similarly Dom d'Argonne (1634—1704), a Carthusian, says in his *Mélanges d'histoire et de littérature*, which he published in 1702 under the pseudonym of Vigneul de Marville, that Le Roy wrote and *had printed* in 1593 *La Vertu du Catholicon d'Espagne*, that Gillot, Pithou, &c. added to it a second piece entitled *Abregé des États*, &c., and that the whole was printed in 1594 under the title of *Satyre Ménippée*. (Read, *op. cit.* p. 89.) But this testimony is late, and, in the absence of the printed text of 1593, which Dom d'Argonne does not say that he had seen, carries little weight. The only form in which the primitive text has come down to us is that of a manuscript in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, entitled *Abbregé et L'Ame des Estatz convoquez à Paris en l'an* 1593, which contains the whole satire in a greatly abridged form. This has been printed by Read (*Le texte primitif de la Satyre Ménippée*, 1878).

De Thou, who was an intimate friend of Pierre Pithou, gives the following account of the satire:—*In ea post aulaea in iisque depictas ad rem accommodatas imagines et tabulas, orationes iocosae seriae pari festivitate referuntur. Scripti primus auctor creditur sacrificus quidam e Neustria terra, vir bonus et a factione summe alienus, qui coram Borbonio cardinali juniore quotidie sacrum celebrabat. Sed cum is tantum prima theatri vestigia delineasset, succedens alius scenam perfecte struxit* (*Hist. sui temp. lib.* cv. c. 18). D'Aubigné's account runs as follows:—*Mais ce qui les* (*les Estats*) *rendit du tout meprisables furent divers escrits semez contre et entre eux, la plus excellente satyre qui ait*

paru de nostre temps, portant pour titre le Catholicon d'Espagne ; ce livre composé par un ausmonier du Cardinal de Bourbon, homme de peu d'apparence et de nom ; Rapin, à qui on l'avoit attribué, y contribua quelques vers seulement (*Hist. Univ., liv.* XIII. c. xiii. ed. Ruble VIII. 244). The reference to the Estates shews that D'Aubigné must be referring to the primitive version of the satire, which appeared in March or April, 1593, but though he calls it *le Catholicon*, he does not necessarily mean that this was the original title. It has been objected with regard to his last remark that there are no verses in the existing manuscript, but we do not know that all the manuscript copies were identical, and there may have been others which contained verses. Both De Thou's and D'Aubigné's remarks alike point to the fact that the satire in its original form was the work of Le Roy. But there is nothing in either of their statements to contradict the testimony of Pierre Dupuy and the generally accepted tradition that the satire in its final shape was due to several hands. De Thou's use of the singular (*succedens alius*) is a familiar Latin idiom which does not exclude a plurality of persons.

On the evidence before us, and having regard to the weight of De Thou's testimony as the intimate friend of Pierre Pithou, I believe that Le Roy's work is represented substantially, if not literally, by the manuscript printed by Read. To suppose that Le Roy only wrote the first part, *La vertu du Catholicon*, is to lay a wrong stress on D'Aubigné's words. They do not imply that the original title was *Le Catholicon d'Espagne*, nor was this a title which, so far as we know, the satire ever bore, except perhaps in popular speech. With regard to the printed pamphlet which Leber says that he saw, his attainments and bibliographical experience entitle him to belief, but his statement that it was printed at Tours by Iamet Mettayer is doubtless only an inference. It is of course possible that Mettayer may have begun by printing separately the first part of the satire, *La vertu du Catholicon*, though, as Read points out, it is somewhat strange that he should have said nothing about it either in his *Premier* or his *Deuxième advis*. It is much more likely that whatever the original pamphlet was it was printed by some other printer.

But whatever may be the truth about the primitive text of the *Ménippée*, the important fact remains that it began to circulate, at any rate in manuscript, as early as April, 1593. M. Brunetière's statements that "it appeared in 1594," and that it was published "nine months after the conversion and three months after the entry of Henry IV into Paris," are based on the erroneous idea that "appearance" and "publication" necessarily imply printing.

APPENDIX G.

On some biographical and bibliographical works.

1. André Thevet, *Portraits et vies des hommes illustres*, 2 vols. fo., Paris, 1584.

André Thevet (1502—1590) was a Franciscan, who devoted several years of his life to travelling. He accompanied Villegagnon on his celebrated expedition to Brazil, but fell ill immediately after getting there, and as soon as he was well enough to travel returned to France. After his return he became almoner to Catharine de' Medici, and historiographer and cosmographer to Charles IX. His work is of little value except for the lives of those with whom he was personally acquainted. Some of the woodcuts are excellent. Pierre de l'Estoile, in recording Thevet's death, speaks of him as *insigne menteur et fort ignorant* (*Journal*, v. 61). See Niceron, *Mémoires* xxxiii.

2. *La Bibliothèque d'Antoine du Verdier.* Lyons, 1585 (printing finished December 15, 1584).

Premier volume de la Bibliothèque du sieur de la Croix du Maine. Paris, 1584.

Antoine du Verdier (1544—1600), a rich man with a fine library, who had houses at Lyons and elsewhere in that part of France, and Francois Grudé, sieur de la Croix du Maine (1552—1592), conceived independently the design of making a *catalogue raisonné* of French writers, but they had evidently communicated with each other before their works appeared. In 1772–3 Rigoley de Juvigny published an edition of the two bibliographies, with notes by La Monnoye and others: *Les Bibliothèques françoises de La Croix du Maine et de Du Verdier*, 6 vols., of which the first two volumes contain La Croix du Maine's bibliography, and the remaining four that of Du Verdier. For the more obscure writers of the sixteenth century the notices are of great value, but the biographical dates are not always to be relied on.

See Niceron, *Mémoires* xxiv.

3. *Virorum doctrina illustrium, qui hoc seculo in Gallia floruerunt elogia*, Poitiers, 1598; *Gallorum doctrina illustrium qui nostra patrumque memoria floruerunt elogia. Recens aucta et in duos divisa libros, ib.* 1602; *aucta denuo et recognita*, Paris, 1630.

The author of this work, Scévole de Sainte-Marthe (Sammarthanus), has already been noticed in these pages. (See *ante*, pp. 23, 24.) He was born in 1536, and died in 1623. His *elogia*, as their name implies, are panegyrics and not biographies, and give very little information. The first edition, in one book, contains sixty-six *elogia*, the last being that of Florent Chrestien, who died in 1596. The final edition, in five books, contains about one hundred and fifty *elogia*, the last being that of Estienne Pasquier, who died in 1615. A life of Sainte-Marthe is prefixed to a translation of the *Pædotrophia* into English verse by H. W. Tytler, M.D., 1757.

4. Guillaume Colletet (1598—1659), *Vies des poètes français*. The author, an indifferent poet who was patronised by Richelieu, left this work in manuscript, comprising about four hundred lives. In the conflagration of the Louvre library by the Commune in May, 1871, it was destroyed, but about half the lives (193), together with portions of others (33) had either been printed or copied in manuscript. Moreover the *Bibliothèque Nationale* has recently acquired a copy, more or less imperfect, of 147 lives, which was probably made for Aimé-Martin. I subjoin a list of those lives which belong to our period, and have been printed. It must be confessed that they contain very little information.

R. Belleau.	*Œuvres*, ed. Gouverneur, 3 vols., 1867.
E. de Beaulieu.	ed. P. Tamizey de Larroque in *Plaquettes Gontaudaises.*
P. de Brach.	*Œuvres*, ed. R. Dezeimeris, II. 1861.
L. de Carle.	*Vies des poètes bordelais*, ed. T. de Larroque, 1873.
J. Doublet.	*Élégies*, ed. P. Blanchemain, 1869.
G. Salluste du Bartas.	*Vies des poètes gascons*, ed. T. de Larroque, 1866.
G. du Faur de Pibrac.	ed. T. de Larroque, 1871.
Pernette du Guillet.	*Œuvres*, ed. Breghot du Lut, 1830.
A. Jamyn.	*Œuvres*, ed. C. Bonnet, I. 1878.
E. de la Boétie.	*Vies des poètes bordelais.*
J. Bastier de la Peruse.	*Poètes angoumoisins*, ed. E. Gellibert des Seguins and E. Castaigne, 1863.
O. de Magny.	*Dernières poésies*, ed. E. Courbet, 1880.

C. Marot.	*Œuvres*, ed. G. Guiffrey, 1871.
Marguerite de Navarre.	*Poètes angoumoisins.*
F. Perrin.	ed. A. de Charmasse, 1887.
F. Rabelais.	ed. Philomneste, Jun. (G. Brunet), 1867.
N. Rapin.	*Le Cabinet historique* for 1871, pp. 235—257.
M. Regnier.	*Œuvres*, ed. E. de Barthélemy, 1862.
P. Ronsard.	*Œuvres inédites*, ed. P. Blanchemain, 1855.
M. de Saint-Gelais.	*Poètes angoumoisins.*
E. Tabourot.	Rochambeau, *La famille de Ronsart*, p. 251, 1868.
J. Tahureau.	*Mignardises amoureuses*, ed. P. Blanchemain, 1868.

Extracts from the lives of J. du Bellay and J.-A. de Baïf will be found in Rochambeau, *ib.* p. 192, and from that of Baïf in Sainte-Beuve's chapter on Desportes in the *Tableau de la poésie française.*

See T. de Larroque, introduction to *Vies des poètes gascons*; L. Pannier, *Essai de restitution du manuscrit de G. Colletet*, *Rev. critique*, 1870 (2) 324—338; P. Bonnefon in *Rev. d'hist. litt.* II.

5. *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes illustres dans la republique des lettres, avec le catalogue raisonné de leurs ouvrages*, 43 vols., 1729—1745.

Jean-Pierre Niceron, a Barnabite father, was born in 1685, and died in 1738. After serving as professor of rhetoric and philosophy, first at Loches and then at Montargis, he was recalled in 1716 to Paris, where he spent the rest of his life in literary researches. At his death he had published thirty-nine volumes of his great work, and left materials for a fortieth, which was published in 1740 under the editorial care of the *abbé* Goujet and others, who afterwards added three more volumes.

The names are not arranged on any plan, but volumes X. XX. and XXX. each contain an index to the previous nine volumes, while from volume XXXI. onwards there is a general index to all the volumes published.

The account of each writer is followed by a full bibliography of his works. Niceron has performed his task with, on the whole, great accuracy and competence.

6. *Bibliothèque Françoise ou Histoire de la Littérature Françoise*, par M. l'abbé Goujet, 18 vols., 1740—1756.

Claude-Pierre Goujet (1697—1767) was a Jesuit student, who resisted all attempts to make him a Jesuit. His work is arranged

on the following plan : I. deals with Language, II. with Rhetoric, III. with *Artes poeticae*, IV.—VIII. with Translations, IX. to XVIII. with Poetry, sixteenth century poets being contained in X.—XIV. For the biography of those poets who find a place in Niceron's work, Goujet copies his predecessor almost literally, though with some additions of his own, but he replaces Niceron's bare list of works by citation and some not very valuable criticism.

The whole canon, as it may be called, of the *Dictionnaire Historique* from the first edition of Louis Moreri's *Grand Dictionnaire Historique* in 1674 (1 vol. fo.) to its last in 1760 (10 vols.) is admirably dealt with by R. C. Christie in his *Selected Essays and Papers*, pp. 11—16. The canon comprises besides Moreri Bayle's Dictionary, first published as a supplement to Moreri, in 2 vols., fo. 1697, that of Chaufepié, 4 vols., 1750—1756, and that of Prosper Marchand, 2 vols., fo. 1758–9, the two latter being published as supplements to Bayle.

APPENDIX H.

Chronological Table.

1521 *Le Violier des histoires romaines.*

1527 *Histoire de Bayard* (by *Le loyal serviteur*)[1].

1529 Budé's *Commentarii linguae graecae.*
Foundation of the royal professorships.
Translation of the *Celestina.*
Tory's *Champ fleury.*

1530 First royal professors appointed.
Lefèvre's Bible.
Palsgrave's *L'esclarcissement de la langue francoyse.*

1531 *Le Parangon des nouvelles honnestes et delectables.*

1532 Marot's *Adolescence Clementine.*
Pantagruel[2].
Alamanni's *Opere Toscane*, published at Lyons (completed in 1533).

1533 New edition of *Pantagruel.*

1534 Marot's *Suite de l'Adolescence.*
Gargantua ; new edition of *Pantagruel.*

1535 The Bible of P.-R. Olivetan (Protestant Bible).
New edition of *Gargantua.*

1536 Quarrel between Marot and Sagon.
Calvin's *Institutio.*

1537 Translation of the *Cortegiano.*

1538 New edition of Marot's poems.
Des Periers's *Cymbalum Mundi.*

1539 Edict of Villers-Cotterets.

1540 Death of Budé.
First Book of *Amadis de Gaule.*

[1] There was possibly an earlier edition in 1524.
[2] Probably published at the end of this year.

1541 Calvin's *Institution de la religion Chrestienne* (first French edition).
1542 Dolet's translation of Cicero's Letters.
Heroet's *La parfaicte amye.*
New edition of *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua.*
1543 Prose translation of the *Orlando Furioso* (by Jean Martin?).
Ch. Estienne's translation of *Gli Ingannati.*
1544 Deaths of Marot and Des Periers.
A new edition of Marot's poems.
Des Periers's *Recueil.*
Scève's *Delie.*
1545 Calvin's *Institution* (second French edition).
Le Maçon's translation of the *Decameron.*
A translation of Ariosto's *Suppositi.*
Paré's *Méthode de traicter les playes faictes par hacquebutes.*
1546 Estienne Dolet burnt.
Third book of *Pantagruel.*
1547 *Les Marguerites de la Marguerite des princesses.*
Peletier's *Œuvres Poëtiques.*
Saint-Gelais's *Œuvres.*
Amyot's *L'Histoire Æthiopique.*
Du Fail's *Propos rustiques.*
1548 Sibilet's *Art poëtique.*
Fourth book of *Pantagruel* (in 11 chapters).
Du Fail's *Baliverneries.*
1549 Death of Margaret of Navarre.
Du Bellay's *La deffence et illustration de la langue Francoyse, Olive* and *Recueil.*
1550 Ronsard's *Odes.*
T. de Bèze's *Abraham Sacrifiant.*
1551
1552 New edition of the Third book of *Pantagruel.*
Fourth book of *Pantagruel* (complete).
Ronsard's *Amours.*
Baïf's *Amours.*
Performance of Jodelle's *Cléopâtre* (?) and *Eugène.*
1553 Death of Rabelais (or 1554).
Magny's *Les Amours.*
1554 Magny's *Les Gayetés.*
Tahureau's Poems.
Rabutin's *Commentaires.*
1555 Death of Tahureau.

Ronsard's *Hymnes* and "*Amours de Marie.*"
Louise Labé's *Œuvres.*
Vauquelin de la Fresnaye's *Foresteries* (books i., ii.).
Ramus's *Dialectique.*

1556

1557 Magny's *Les Soupirs.*
La Peruse's *Medée.*

1558 Death of Saint-Gelais.
Les nouvelles recreations et joyeux devis.
Du Bellay's *Les Regrets.*

1559 Amyot's translation of Plutarch's *Lives* and of Longus's Pastoral of *Daphnis and Chloe.*
Du Bellay's *Le poëte courtisan.*
Magny's *Les Odes.*

1560 Death of Joachim du Bellay.
Ronsard's *Œuvres*, 4 vols. (first collected edition).
Pasquier's *Recherches de la France*, book i.
The "*Tigre*" (attributed to Hotman).

1561 Death of Magny.
Grévin's *Theatre.*
Scaliger's *Poetice.*

1562 *L'isle sonnante.*
Ronsard's *Discours des misères de ce temps.*

1563 Death of La Boétie.
Palissy's *Recepte véritable.*

1564 Death of Calvin.
Fifth book of *Pantagruel.*

1565 Ronsard's *Abrégé de l'art poétique françois* and *Elegies.*
La Place's *Commentaires.*
Pasquier's *Recherches*, books i., ii.
"*Le Livre des Marchands.*"

1566 Death of Louise Labé.
Henri Estienne's *Apologie pour Hérodote.*
Performance of Filleul's *Les Ombres.*

1567 Ronsard's *Œuvres*, 6 vols.
Performance of Baïf's *Le Brave.*

1568 Garnier's *Porcie.*

1569 Du Bellay's *Œuvres.*
Scèvole de Sainte-Marthe's *Premières œuvres.*

1570 Death of Grévin.

1571 La Boétie's *Vers français.*
Visit of *I Gelosi* to Paris.

1572 Death of Ramus.
Amyot's translation of Plutarch's *Moralia.*
Ronsard's *Franciade.*
Belleau's *Bergerie.*
Baïf's collected poems (completed 1573).
Jean de la Taille's *Saül le furieux.*

1573 Death of Jodelle.
Yver's *Le Printemps d' Yver.*
Du Bartas's *La Muse Chrestienne.*
Desportes's *Les premières œuvres.*
Jean de la Taille's *La Famine* and *Les Corrivaux.*
Garnier's *Hippolyte.*
Belleau's *La Reconnue.*
Hotman's *Franco-Gallia.*

1574 Pibrac's *Cinquante quatrains.*
Jodelle's *Œuvres.*
Garnier's *Cornelie.*
Ronsard retires from the Court.

1575 Jamyn's *Œuvres poëtiques.*

1576 P. de Brach's *Poemes.*
Belleau's *Pierres précieuses.*
Baïf's *Mimes* (book i.).
La Planche's *Histoire de l'Estat de France.*
Bodin's *Les Six livres de la republique.*,
Du Haillan's *Histoire de France.*

1577 Death of Belleau.
Second visit of *I Gelosi* to Paris.

1578 Du Bartas's *La Semaine.*
Ronsard's *Œuvres*, 5 vols.
Henri Estienne's *Deux dialogues du nouveau françois italianizé.*
Garnier's *Marc Antoine.*
Translation of Montemôr's *Diana.*
New translation of the *Celestina.*

1579 Larivey's *Six premières comédies.*
Garnier's *La Troade.*
Fauchet's *Recueil des antiquitez Gauloises.*
Vindiciæ contra tyrannos[1].

1580 Palissy's *Discours admirables.*
Montaigne's *Essays* (two books).
Garnier's *Antigone.*

1581 Fauchet's *Recueil de l'origine de la langue et poesie françoise.*

[1] Written almost certainly in 1574.

La Popelinière's *Histoire de France.*
Mornay's *De la vérité de la religion chrestienne.*
1582 Death of Odet de Turnèbe.
Second edition of Montaigne's *Essays.*
Garnier's *Bradamante.*
1583 Rapin's *Les plaisirs du gentilhomme champêtre.*
Pibrac's *Les quatrains* (complete).
Garnier's *Les Juives.*
1584 Death of Pibrac.
Du Bartas's *La Seconde Semaine.*
Odet de Turnèbe's *Les Contents.*
Bouchet's *Les Serées* (first book).
Ronsard's *Œuvres,* 1 vol. fo.
Translation of Tasso's *Aminta.*
1585 Death of Ronsard (December 27).
Garnier's *Tragedies.*
Du Fail's *Les contes et discours d'Eutrapel.*
Cholières's *Les Neuf Matinées.*
1586 Pasquier's *Letters* (ten books).
1587 Cholières's *Les Après disnées.*
La Noue's *Discours politiques et militaires.*
1588 Fifth edition of Montaigne's *Essays* (first edition in three books).
N. de Montreux's *Les bergeries de Juliette* (first French pastoral novel).
1589 Death of Baïf.
1590 Deaths of Montaigne, Paré, Palissy, and Du Bartas.
1591 Deaths of La Noue and Noel du Fail.
1592 Monluc's *Commentaire.*
1593 Translation of Guarini's *Il Pastor fido.*
Charron's *Les trois vérités.*
1594 Durand's *Œuvres poetiques.*
La Satire Ménippée.
1595 Posthumous edition of Montaigne's *Essays.*
Du Vair's *De l'éloquence françoise.*
1596 Deaths of Bodin and P. Pithou.
Pasquier's *Recherches,* books i.—vi.
Performance of N. de Montreux's *L'Arimène.*
1597 Passerat's *Le premier livre des poemes.*
1598 Death of Henri Estienne.
Guy de Tours's *Premières œuvres poétiques.*
1599

1600 Death of Garnier.
O. de Serres's *Theatre d'Agriculture.*
1601 Montchrestien's *Tragedies.*
Bertaut's *Œuvres poétiques.*
Charron's *De la sagesse.*
1602 Death of Passerat.
Bertaut's *Vers amoureux.*
1603 Death of Charron.
1604 First part of De Thou's History.
Second edition of Charron's *De la sagesse.*
1605 Vauquelin de la Fresnaye's *Diverses poesies.*
1606 Death of Desportes.
1607 Death of Vauquelin de la Fresnaye.
1608 Regnier's *Satires* (i—ix, xii).
1609 „ „ (i—xii).

A few of the works noticed in this history were not published till after the death of Henry IV (1610), notably D'Aubigné's *Les Tragiques*, *Histoire Universelle*, and *Aventures de Fœneste*, which appeared from 1616 to 1630; his *Confession de Sancy*, published in 1660; and his *Vie à ses enfants*, which did not see the light till the next century. Regnier's *Macette* appeared in 1612, and Satires xiv—xvii in 1613. Very few of the memoirs of our period were printed before that period was over. Thus Margaret de Valois's memoirs appeared in 1628, Sully's in 1638, Brantôme's in 1665–66, and L'Estoile's *Journal* (except for a short extract published in 1621) not till the eighteenth century.

At the death of Henry IV the following sixteenth century writers were still living, *viz.*: Bertaut, L'Estoile, Larivey, Regnier, Brantôme, Pasquier, Du Perron, Olivier de Serres, all of whom died before 1620; Du Vair and Montchrestien, who died in 1621; Scèvole de Sainte-Marthe, who died in 1623; D'Aubigné and Jean de la Taille, who died in 1630; and Sully, who lived till 1641. Some of these, however, namely, Brantôme, L'Estoile, and Sully, published nothing in their lifetime, while all the others, except Regnier and D'Aubigné, had practically ended their literary career before the close of our period.

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